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CHINON'S 8mm:  
SMALLEST MINI YET



magazine

## OPTICAL SECRETS!

New Camcorder Visions

**ANTENNAS:  
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GHOSTS!**

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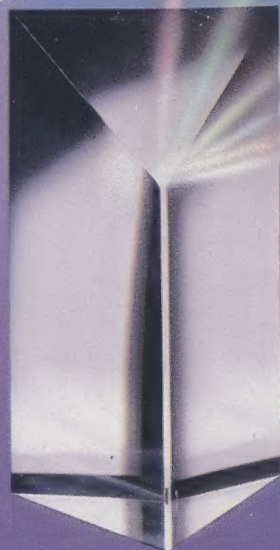
New Shopper's  
Column

**VIDEOTESTS**

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Camcorder

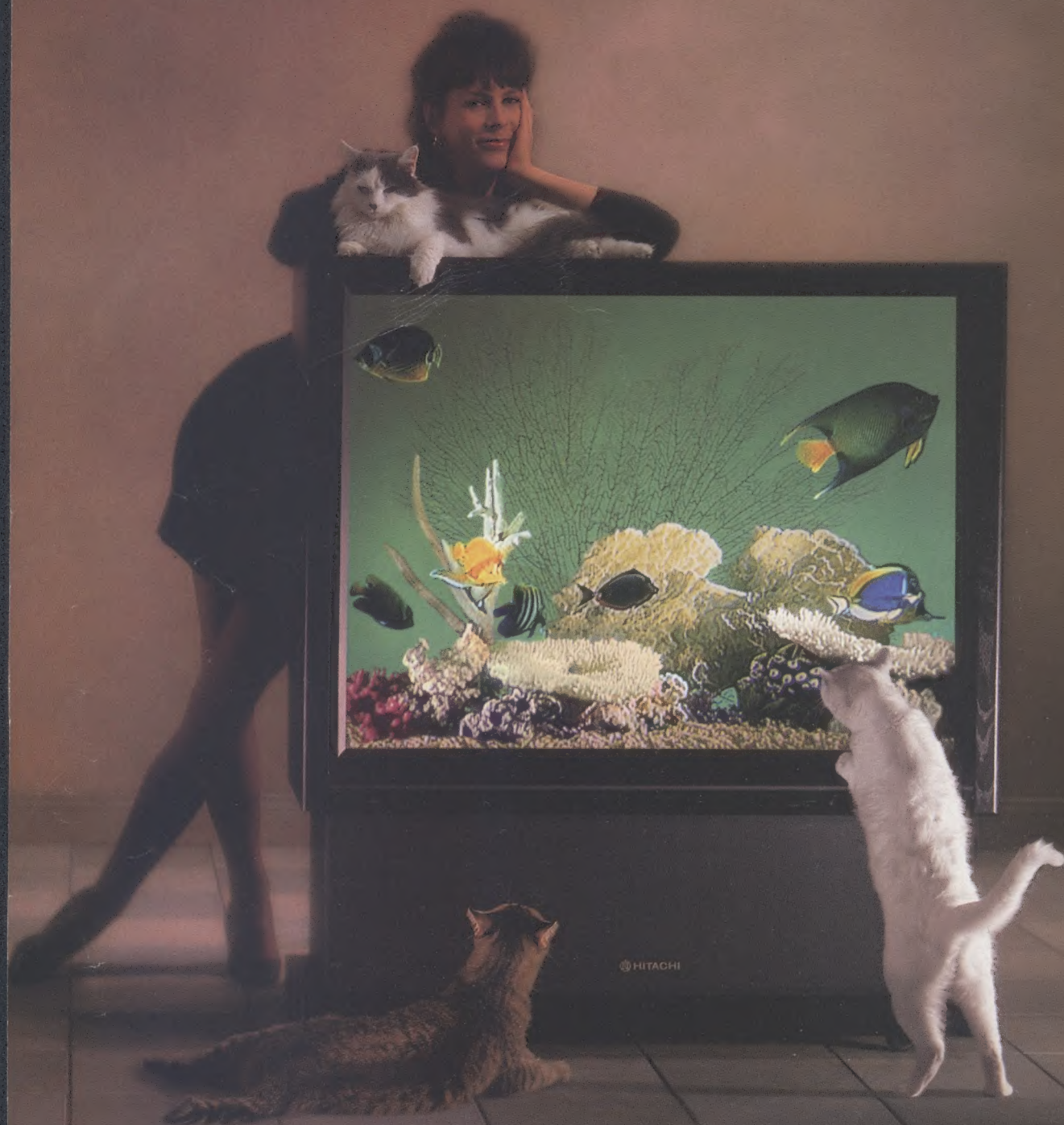
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# VIDEO

magazine



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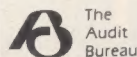
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New 8mm and VHS-C camcorders advance the art of designing autofocus zoom lenses to new levels. Photograph by Vittorio Sartor

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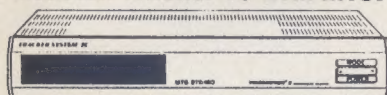
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# CHANNEL ONE

*And #%\*\$% to you, too*

Letters, we get letters. Lots of letters, covering virtually every column and feature article we publish. We run as many as possible in our "Feedback" section, but we can't print them all. This angers some of our readers, one of whom recently accused us of holding back those communiques which disagree with our opinions, evaluations, judgments and sanity.

Not true, as a close reading of our new "Reader Forum" (July '90) clearly illustrates. In that inaugural column, we published a range of letters written in reaction to our earlier "Format Face-Off" feature (March '90). Many took strong exception to the "Face-Off," and let us know about it in no uncertain terms.

Still, we can't print every letter, so I've decided to distill some of the venom dripping from recent missives, and present it here. In the interest of space, I'm omitting both the letter writers' names and the topics in question. Here goes:

"Shame on you for such shoddy thinking." "...some 17-year-old venting his ignorance!" "An absolute outrage!" "Appalling!" "Excellent example of scrambled thinking." "Nothing short of a flagrant brain-washing attempt." "What a bunch of morons!" That's only a sampling of the kind and gentle things said about us. I'll share more with you in future columns.

With this issue, we launch two new columns: "Collector's Clearinghouse" and "Your Money's Worth." "Collector's Clearinghouse" essentially invented itself, being the most obvious answer to the overwhelming volume of mail triggered by "Possessed," our feature on program collectors. Turns out we have thousands of possessed readers, all desperately searching for hard-to-find videotapes. We hope "Collector's Clearinghouse" makes the task a little easier.

"Your Money's Worth" is, very simply, an effort to help you get your money's worth — whether it involves buying new video gear, getting current equipment serviced or taking a flyer on used equipment. The first column, written by long-time colleague and talented freelancer Christine Begole, outlines seven free services you can get from video manufacturers. We'd like your reaction to this first effort, and to subsequent "Money's Worth" columns. Let us know what you think.

*Art Levis*

Art Levis  
Editor-in-Chief





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Panasonic changes all that. Its revolutionary new Digital EIS Stabilizer can hold

the picture steady even if your hand shakes. Yet despite its advanced

technology, it's small enough to fit in the palm of your hand.

And with the Palmcorder there's no need to make special connections to watch your home videos. You just slip the 90-minute cassette in the PlayPack adapter, which then slides into your VHS recorder. And you can show your home videos on any of the 60 million VHS recorders out there.

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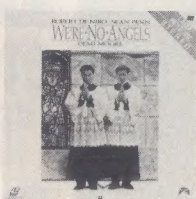


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If you're curious about those shiny discs you've been seeing all over, you're not the only one. Hundreds of thousands of people have already brought laserdiscs home. It seems no one can pass up the latest movies on laserdisc, with its incredible picture (60% sharper than ordinary videotape) and flawless CD sound. You're probably next. Just be careful when you visit your nearby laserdisc store. The way it's been going, these things are likely to fly out as soon as you open the door. **PIONEER LaserDisc**



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magazine

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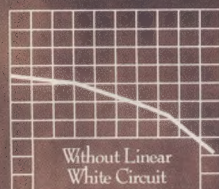
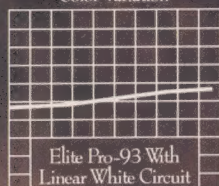
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# There's A Fine Line That Separates A Good Video System From The Very Best In The World.

Color Variation



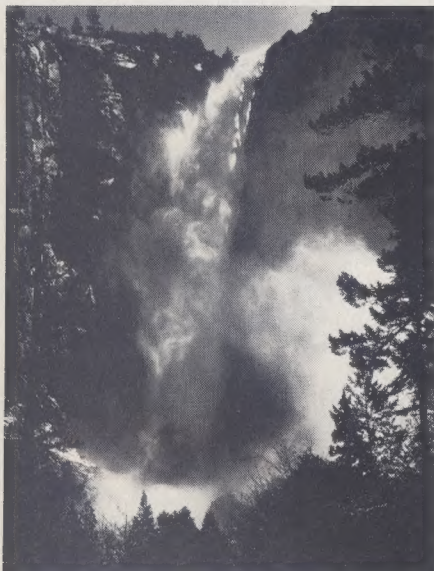
It begins with consistent screen color, a vital element in big-screen viewing. And as the line to the left shows, the Elite® Pro-93 Monitor, with its Linear White Circuit, offers the most consistently accurate color you'll ever find. With a picture that's visibly brighter and sharper corner to corner than any other big-screen. But the element that really sets the Elite video system apart is the LD-S2 LaserDisc Player. It offers Elite's exclusive Total Stage Digital Video Processing for the purest reproduction achievable, and is recognized around the world as the best home-video component. Combined, the LD-S2 and Pro-93 offer the most realistic big-screen experience ever. All of which suggests there's one line to choose for the finest in video. Elite.



Call 1-800-421-1404 for the Elite dealer nearest you. © 1990 Pioneer Electronics (USA) Inc., Long Beach, CA

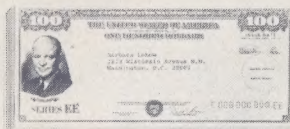
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Bridalveil Fall, Yosemite National Park, California c. 1927. Photography by Ansel Adams. Courtesy of the Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust. All rights reserved.

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EDITED BY BRIAN CLARK

# FEEDBACK

## Hamming it up

A recent column ("Tomorrow," Aug. '90) states that sending color still video images by radio is a new idea. Amateur radio operators around the world have been exchanging video frames via the ham frequencies for years. And they aren't spending kilobucks to do it. One popular setup uses the Amiga personal computer, an inexpensive video digitizer and a special modem to interface to the radio transceiver. Software is available to manipulate such aspects of the images as compression, noise reduction and enhancement.

Ray Dabkowski,  
Chesterland, Ohio  
Call sign: N8KBF

## Time-base experiments

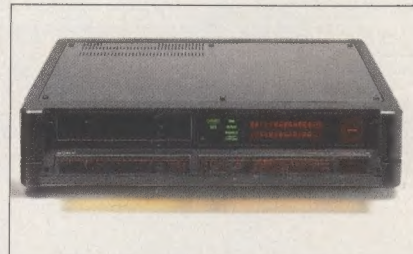
Regarding your article on time-base error ("Technically Speaking," June '90), it's worth adding that all home-entertainment VCRs and videocassette players exhibit time-base error to some degree. TV sets and monitor/receivers have circuitry that corrects for some error in the source material: The degree to which a unit corrects is called its "pull-in range." I experienced this type of problem and, after consulting service people and experimenting with several combinations, learned that VCRs with excessive time-base error (usually inexpensive models) require TV sets or monitors with superior pull-in ranges (usually more expensive models). The converse would also be true.

Mark Weber  
Toronto, Ontario

## You beta believe it

The debate over VHS versus Beta has been rekindled by your "Format Face-Off" (March '90; also "Reader Forum," July '90). As a Betaphile, what perplexes

*Video Magazine welcomes your comments. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. Letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to Feedback, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.*



**Coming to America?** Betaphiles hope Sony's anniversary Beta VCR, available in Japan, will land here.

me is the extent to which the VHS camp has been able to convince the American people that the Beta format is dead in this country. How successful has this been? Let me cite two examples. First, my fellow workers (electrical engineers) recognize the technical advantages of SuperBeta over HQ VHS, yet they're hesitant to invest in a format for which pre-recorded and blank tapes are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

Second, Sony seems to be abandoning the U.S. Beta market. Even though Sony now owns Columbia Pictures, the CBS/Columbia House Video Club is phasing out Beta movies. Even more irritating is Sony's shunning of Beta consumers by excluding Beta tape purchasers in a current promotional offer.

Greg L. Kimnach  
Parma, Ohio

## Satisfied laserphile

Regarding Mauricio Heilbron's comments about feeling betrayed by rising laserdisc prices ("Feedback," Aug. '90), here's another point of view. I've been an avid supporter of laserdiscs since 1980, and I agree there may be some frustration with many re-releases. I too hope the studios continue to improve the quality of releases. But, as for my library of titles, nothing gives me more pleasure than to replace an old panned-and-scanned movie bearing analog sound with a new letterboxed version featuring digital sound.

The increasing average cost of laserdiscs is a problem, but blame for this price increase lies with only a few distributors. All in all, I feel laserdiscs are finally making good on promises made a decade ago.

Tony Cook  
Jerseyville, Illinois





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How the Club operates: about every four weeks (up to 13 times a year) we send you our Video Club Magazine, reviewing our Director's Selection, plus many alternate movies. And up to four times a year, you may also receive offers of Special Selections, usually at a discount off regular Club prices, for a total of up to 17

buying opportunities.

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282/P90

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M98/L10/L12



# LATE NEWS

## Chinon 8mm: Panasonic preview?

Chinon's introduction in July of two new subcompact 8mm camcorders startled no one, since the company has offered 8mm machines before. The surprise was the actual manufacturer of the camcorders: Matsushita, Japanese parent company of Panasonic. Given the flurry of new 8mm models by RCA, Hitachi and Zenith earlier this year, Chinon's move left many in the video industry wondering if Panasonic will also bring out versions of the new machines.

Both Chinon models look like longer, lower versions of Panasonic's Compact VHS PV-10, and both are slightly smaller than Sony's TR5. The \$1,595 SC-96 includes a 6x zoom and a view-



**Panasonic '91?** Chinon's Matsushita-made 8mm camcorders may indicate Panasonic's plans for 8mm.

finder menu to control functions like fade, white balance and shutter speed. A step-up model, the \$1,795 SC-98, adds an 8x zoom and an exceptional selection of scene transition options. A user can choose edge-to-center wipes in square and diamond patterns, with soft edges or strobe-like artifacts. A random fade mode turns the picture white pixel-by-

pixel. Fades and wipes can also be frozen at any point. Both models hit the stores this fall.

## Cable bills hang on

After months of debate, discord and diatribe, cable reregulation bills in both houses of Congress remain alive, but hardly kicking. Despite a recent Federal Communications Commission report that recommended legislative measures to increase competition in the industry, President Bush is likely to veto any reregulation bill.

Reregulation bills have been approved by the telecommunications committees of both houses. A compromise bill probably will emerge, and may come up for a vote before the three-month congressional recess that begins in October. The Senate bill would guarantee cable competitors access to all programming, allow local governments to dictate which channels cable operators must carry, and permit rate regulation in the absence of competition. The House bill is similar, but also limits foreign ownership of cable companies.

## U.S./Japan HDTV entry wins Moscow test

A recent test in the Soviet Union compared high-definition TV standards proposed by European researchers with standards from American and Japanese labs. Although the European standard offers greater resolution, the testing group preferred the U.S./Japanese version hands down. The Soviet Union currently uses the PAL standard common to most of Europe. But the results of this test could help persuade Russia—and maybe the world—to adopt the future American HDTV system.

The proposed European standard produces 1,250 scan lines at 25 frames per second, while the U.S./Japanese standard delivers 1,125 scan lines at 30 frames per second. While several HDTV systems have been proposed, most conform to one of these standards.

The Moscow group compared systems on 38-inch Sony monitors. The testers faulted the European standard for a flicker caused by its lower frame rate. ■

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# GAZETTE



A Real Mouthful: *The Hidden's* alien creature departs.

## Hollywood's little crop of horrors

Four years ago this magazine published a story defending "splatter" movies—that is, horror films boasting unflinching, graphic violence. Since then, Hollywood's resistance to splatter has diminished, as witnessed in recent mainstream blockbusters like *Total Recall* and *RoboCop 2*. The gore quotient in fright flicks has risen accordingly, and here are some of the bloodiest—and best—horror movies of the last four years, presented just in time for Halloween:

- *The Hitcher* (1986; HBO). Glassy-eyed maniac Rutger Hauer tracks bewildered student C. Thomas Howell on the road, leaving a trail of severed human limbs in his wake. This is one of the most relentlessly mean-spirited movies ever, made all the more disturbing by the homicidal Hauer's complete lack of any apparent motivation.

- *From Beyond* (1986; Vestron). A scientist unleashes some nasty monsters from another dimension in director Stuart Gordon's follow-up to his unfor-

gettable *Re-Animator*. As in that earlier classic, Gordon juggles Lovecraftian melodrama, deadpan humor, kinky sex, and buckets of blood, ably supported by whacked-out performances from Jeffrey Combs and Barbara Crampton.

- *Demons* (1986; New World). Moviegoers turn into zombies in this ludicrous gorefest from Lamberto Bava, son of Italian horrormeister Mario Bava. As moronic as they come, *Demons* nevertheless employs some gimmicks you've definitely never seen before. (At one point, a helicopter plunges through the theater's ceiling to rescue the surrounded hero!) Easily the LOUDEST horror movie ever made.

- *The Fly* (1986; CBS/Fox). Jeff Goldblum turns into the titular insect in genre master David Cronenberg's first big mainstream success. Like many of Cronenberg's best, *The Fly* traces the slow physical degeneration of its hero in agonizing detail, but beyond all the pus, ooze and vomit is a compelling character whose demise is, ultimately, heartbreaking.

- *Evil Dead 2* (1987; Vestron). Campers fight off demonic possession in Sam Raimi's hilarious remake of his 1983 *The Evil Dead*. The highlight of this hyperactive thriller is the hero's duel to the death with his own right hand! Filled with goofy camera angles and consistently inventive gags, and topped by a wonderful epilogue, *Evil Dead 2* is as close to a live-action cartoon as anything else.

- *Hellraiser* (1987; New World). A man explores new dimensions in pleasure and pain via a sort of demonic Rubik's Cube. Clive Barker's directorial debut isn't as masterful as his gut-wrenching fiction, but this mix of graphic sadomasochism and sweaty, nasty sex is unforgettable. And the alien "Pinhead" remains one of the most vividly realized movie monsters of the last few years.

- *The Hidden* (1987; Media). Kyle MacLachlan and Michael Nouri chase down a homicidal extraterrestrial body-shifter. Director Jack Sholder delivers plenty of jolts along with some

welcome humor (the killer is partial to red Ferraris and speed metal music). MacLachlan's performance as an alien cop looks more and more like a dry run for his role as the spacey Agent Cooper on *Twin Peaks*.

- *Near Dark* (1987; HBO). Kathryn Bigelow (*Blue Steel*) directed this stylish, atmospheric vampire western. Lance Henriksen leads a vanload of blood-suckers on a Sun Belt rampage, highlighted by a massacre in a redneck bar that's one of the most brutal sequences you'll ever see in a horror film. A gorgeously executed, ingenious addition to vampire movie lore.

- *Bad Dreams* (1988; CBS/Fox). Unfairly slagged as a *Nightmare on Elm Street* rip-



Buggin' Out: Jeff Goldblum's transformation is total in *The Fly*.





**Tooth and Nail:** *Near Dark's* highway vampires.

off, *Bad Dreams* features Richard Lynch as a cult leader who, after engineering a Jonestown-style mass suicide, haunts the dreams of the only survivor. A nifty twist midway through the movie makes this clever low-budget thriller worthwhile.

● *The Lair of the White Worm* (1989; Vestron). A sleeky seductress sacrifices nubile young virgins to a giant snake god in this feverish fantasy from the always unpredictable Ken Russell. The Bram Stoker story is updated with a healthy dose of campy humor (you aren't supposed to miss the phallic suggestion in the title), but it's Amanda Donohoe's luscious performance as the snake-worshiper that makes this one memorable.

—Lou Kesten

## Schlondorff's bargain city

When director Volker Schlondorff looked into his crystal ball to decide what the near future would look like in *The Handmaid's Tale*, (HBO Home Video), he saw clothing by Sears, furnishings by K-Mart.

"It had to be in the future, and yet had to look familiar," says Schlondorff, an Americanized German (by way of France) who specializes in adapting literary works to the screen. (*The Handmaid's Tale* started as Margaret Atwood's futuristic novel about an authoritarian society in which young women are enslaved for breeding purposes.) "We composed this future out of the cheapest elements of our present. Whatever the future is going to be it's going to be cheap. There's pollution, civil war, and they don't have much."

Natasha Richardson plays the hand-

maid who comes to live in the house of a government official (Robert Duvall) and his sterile wife (Faye Dunaway).

Through a pseudo-religious ceremony, the young handmaid is impregnated by the commander, while lying between the legs of the wife. If it is humiliating to imagine, it was even more humiliating to film, says Schlondorff.

"This scene could either be totally embarrassing or hilarious. It's very hard to ask actors to do that, because they are the ones who have to drop their pants. And we're not talking *any* actors here."

Richardson's comment on the scene? "I saw how well the others were coping, so what can you do? You go off in a corner, have a little cry, take a deep breath, and you start over."



**Handmaid's** Atwood and Schlondorff

—Jami Bernard

## Video Flashes

**The Cup Runneth Over.** Did last summer's endless World Cup coverage leave you less than enthralled? Consider Italy's obsession with the soccer tournament: Not only did a mind-boggling 87 percent of all viewers tune in for their team's semi-finals defeat to Argentina, but a surge in VCR sales—an increase of over 20 percent compared to the same period last year—was widely credited to the availability of previous years' World Cup matches on videocassette. And as soon as the 1990 Cup ended, representatives of RAI, Italy's public broadcaster, went door to door hawking copies of each of this year's 52 games, available on 52 cassettes.

**Under the Knife.** Gordy Falk, the "Picasso of Pumpkins," shares all his practical and creative secrets in a new 30-minute videocassette titled *How to Carve Great Faces for Halloween* (Maier Communications, \$9.95). Falk has risen to fame gradually since he started carving eight years ago, but his pumpkin-covered lawn is now the prime tourist attraction of Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. The video covers such essential topics as "Carving the Lid," "Tool Selection," and "Candling." The tape comes with a free carving knife. Pumpkins not included.

**Now You See 'Em...** If you've been putting off purchasing those Indiana Jones cassettes, now is definitely the time. Paramount has placed all three titles "on moratorium," meaning that the films will be unavailable on tape and disc for two-and-a-half years. Stores and distrib-

utors will, however, be allowed to sell remaining stocks. Meanwhile, Turner Home Entertainment has re-acquired the video rights to *Bringing Up Baby* ("Flashes," May '90), putting that classic Grant-and-Hepburn comedy back in print.



## Feast Your Eyes.

Video's roots obviously go deeper than antique black-&-white TV sets with tiny ten-inch screens, and the Smithsonian Institution is now offering an interactive look at the broad range of synergistic technologies which helped shape video and other seminal information systems.

"Information Age: People, Information &

Technology" celebrates 150 years of electronics development, beginning with Samuel B. Morse's telegraph system and ending with today's advanced computers. In between? Glimpses of those old TV sets, plus early video cameras and the first bulky camcorders. Helping drive touch-screen monitors and other interactive aspects of the exhibit are 43 video monitors, 52 laserdisc players and more than 350 videodiscs, all donated by Pioneer Electronics (USA).



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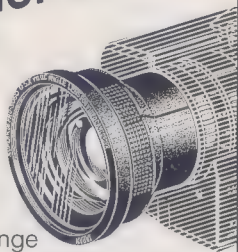
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STATE OF THE ART

# Q & A

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

### Honorable discharge

I use Sony NP-66 batteries on my 8mm camcorder. Should I store the batteries fully charged or fully discharged when I'm not using them?

Bill Hausmann  
Lake Carmel, New York

Sony's NP-66 battery, like other batteries sold for their camcorders (and similar models sold under other brand names), is nickel-cadmium. Such batteries have a tendency to lose their charge faster than lead-acid batteries. If you store the batteries fully charged, you may find they have discharged when you go to use them several weeks later. Store them discharged, and charge them a day or two before use.

If you charge the battery after using it for only a short time (10 minutes or so), it will memorize this short-term cycle, and the charge won't last as long. (Depending on the camcorder, a new NP-66 should deliver from 60 to 90 minutes of continuous recording.) This can be cured by completely discharging the battery. To do this, leave the camcorder on, without a tape in it, until it automatically shuts itself off, indicating battery exhaustion. Then recharge the battery.

Don't store a battery on the camcorder or attached to the recharger, since a small amount of current flows even when the camcorder is off, contributing to rapid discharge. Also, remove a freshly charged battery from the charger to avoid overcharging, which can also degrade battery life.

Given these quirks, it's difficult to keep a camcorder and a battery ready for spontaneous videos. My solution was to purchase Sony's EBP-55 battery case (\$21 from Sony dealers), which uses six AA alkaline batteries to deliver about 45 minutes of recording time.

*Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address queries to Q & A, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.*

While alkalines aren't rechargeable, they maintain power for longer periods, and without the worry of whether they'll be able to deliver when the time comes. Keep the battery case with the camcorder, but not attached to it, so the batteries won't dribble their voltage away while in storage.

### Copy complications

I recently purchased a Panasonic NV-FS100 VCR in Japan. I tried to copy some pre-recorded tapes here with it, using my older RCA VDT-625 as the player, but the picture dropped out on about half the tapes, although the sound usually remained.

When I reverse the two VCRs, I get great copies, and I have no problem recording broadcast programs with either VCR. The salesman said that the problem was some sort of copy-protection in the tapes. Is this correct, or is there something wrong with my VCR?

Name Withheld  
San Francisco, California

Your attempts at copying pre-recorded tapes have been frustrated by Macrovision, the anti-piracy encryption currently used by most major software companies. As you've discovered, the system isn't foolproof—some makes and models of VCRs, especially older machines, can defeat the signal.

There's nothing wrong with your new VCR, but its circuitry is typical of many newer models, which are adjusted to make it more difficult to copy Macrovision-encoded tapes.

### Close, but no cigar

I'm interested in buying an 8mm camcorder, either the Radio Shack model or a Sony. My Radio Shack dealer says the model they sell is made for them by Sony. Is this true, and if so, what Sony model is it similar to?

George Talbot  
Oakland, California

The Radio Shack 8mm camcorder is made by Sanyo, not Sony. It's very similar to the Fisher FVC-720, which sells for about the same price.





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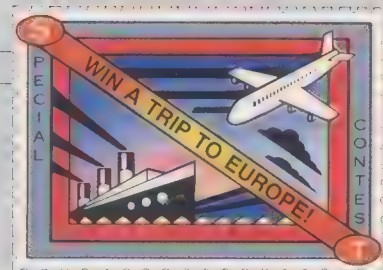
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Our first contest drew such a tremendous response, we're expanding this year's event—along with your chances to win. Entrants have a choice of three categories: 1) Vacations—As in last year's contest, this category lets you present your most captivating out-of-town adventures in any manner you see fit. 2) Family Events—Weddings, picnics, reunions—in short, tapes of anything you do with those near and dear to your heart. 3) Video Art—Here's a category dedicated to your most creative expressions. Send us your scripted plays, music videos, experimental works, or

any other original tape you deem worthy of consideration.



Videotapes may be submitted on any half-inch or 8mm format (no film allowed) and must not exceed 15 minutes in length. You may enter one in each of two categories, but each entrant will only be eligible to win one prize.

One winning tape will be selected for each of the three categories. The tape judged most outstanding of the three will win our Grand Prize. The other two tapes will win First Prizes. Special Merit Awards—for any unique qualities that catch our eye—will be awarded to five separate entries, regardless of category, for a total of 8 prizes. All judging will be by the editors of Video Magazine.

A few words of advice: All entries should be as polished as possible. Pro-

duction and editing techniques, such as graphics and voice-over narration, may help distinguish your work from the competition. Originality counts in all three of our categories—Vacations and Family Events as well as Video Art. Don't be afraid to dazzle us with the full impact of your personal vision. And don't forget to have fun with your video project.

*continued on page 114*





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# COLLECTOR'S CLEARINGHOUSE

## TAPED TREASURES

*Readers in search of Max Headroom, Fractured Flickers, early Hitchcock, TV thrillers, Liberace—even nightly news.*

Once again, we've been overwhelmed by letters in search of hard-to-find tapes. The premiere of "Collector's Clearinghouse" (Aug. '90) drew double the response of our earlier notice announcing this new department. While we can't print every letter (though we wish we could), we can share this month's most intriguing requests with our readers—and we'll continue to run more in future issues.

To be eligible for the Clearinghouse, simply send us a letter describing exactly what you're looking for, and be sure to include your name and address. Requests for copyrighted material must be for personal use only. You may offer to reimburse expenses, but the Clearinghouse is not open to requests for the purchase or sale of tapes. Send requests to Collector's Clearinghouse, *Video Magazine*, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

I worked and traveled with Liberace for many years, and was a personal friend of his. I am looking for tapes of any of the TV series he had through the years, as well as for tapes of his appearances on variety shows, specials and *The Tonight Show*. It would truly mean more than I can express to add them to my collection. I prefer tapes in the Beta format, but any tapes will be appreciated.

Pam Ellis  
5578 Sunnywood Lane  
Cincinnati, OH 45239

I've been taping the dinner-hour network newscasts since 1979. My collection is enormous—nearly 3,000 newscasts. Right now I am looking for newscasts from the '50s through the '70s. I am especially interested in NBC's *Huntley-Brinkley Report* and the CBS *Evening News with Walter Cronkite*, preferably complete, in color, and with original



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commercials. I also collect news bulletins and "continuous coverage" events, like the early moon shots, JFK's assassination, etc. I will gladly trade or reimburse expenses.

George F. Miller, Jr.  
9733 South 51 Avenue  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Your "Collector's Clearinghouse" is the tops. Before I die I would love to see *Sudden Fear*, a 1952 thriller with Joan Crawford, as well as a segment of the 1953 TV series *Suspicion* called "Split Second" or "Fraction of a Second," starring Bette Davis. I will pay all costs or trade for rarities if available. Please help an unfulfilled collector.

John Samuel  
5127 Winchester Avenue.  
Ventnor, NJ 08406-2452

I am looking for the two-part extended edit of *Dune* that aired on television in 1988. Also, I would like any commercials that feature the late Clara Peller, the "Where's the beef?" lady. I will pay shipping, handling and materials, and I will accept VHS or Beta.

C. Ray White  
5029 Perkins Street  
Pensacola, FL 32526

I'm looking for copies of the first six "pilot" episodes of the ABC sci-fi series *Max Headroom*, which ran in early 1987. They were never in reruns or picked up by cable in my area. I'm willing to pay all expenses to get these tapes. Hel-hel-help!

Robert B. O'Neil  
222 Sutton Place  
Norwood, NJ 07648

I'm interested in a couple of great trashy movies: *Attack of the Giant Leeches* (1959) and *The Thing with Two Heads* (1972). The latter, about a bigot who finds his head transplanted onto a black man's body, stars Ray Milland and Rosie Grier. You don't get much trashier than these two. Anybody willing to admit they own them?

Denia Hester  
70 West Huron, #2401  
Chicago, IL 60610

After seeing a performance of *Phantom of the Opera* in London, I became a fan of the story. I've collected a copy of the original book plus videotapes of all the movie versions that have been made. However, I missed the made-for-TV mini-series that was broadcast this year. I will gladly pay reasonable costs to anyone with a copy.

Charles R. Hamil  
464 Fern Avenue  
Titusville, FL 32796

I have been trying to locate VHS copies of Alfred Hitchcock's early movies: *The Ring*, *Champagne*, *Juno and the Paycock*, *Waltzes from Vienna*, *The Pleasure Garden*, *Downhill*, *The Farmer's Wife*, *Elstree Calling*, *The Skin Game*, *Lord Camber's Ladies* and *Harmony Heaven*.

Ernie Norris  
3485 Sawtelle Boulevard, #14  
Los Angeles, CA 90066

I'm looking for videos of the TV series *Fractured Flickers*. It was hosted by Hans Conreid and featured silent movies with humorous dialogue, music and sound ef-



fects added to them. I last saw reruns of this show about 15 years ago.

Kent White  
Box 421  
Fort Scott, KS 66701

As Meryl Streep's biggest fan, I am desperately looking for any talk show appearances she may have done as well as any programs about her. Also, I would like to begin a collection of Academy Awards ceremonies; I need all but the last three years. Finally, I've been searching for a 1979 thriller, *When a Stranger Calls*, with Carol Kane and Charles Durning. I'm willing to reimburse reasonable postage and tape costs.

Jeff Marshall  
1656 East Wood  
Decatur, IL 62521

I am looking for episodes of *My Three Sons* from 1965 to 1970. These episodes should be in color. I also need *I Love Lucy* episodes from 1962 to 1965. I will pay expenses to anyone who has these.

Scott Schilbe  
2175 S.E. Laurel Run Drive  
Ocala, FL 32671

I am always looking for VHS copies of movies and documentaries on World War II and on airships (zeppelins, blimps, etc.). I have many items on these subjects for trade. I am actively seeking *Weekend in Dunkirk*, a French/Italian production starring Jean-Paul Belmondo; a British film called *It Happened Here*; and *Dirigible*, circa 1931, directed by Frank Capra. Naturally I would reimburse for tape and postage. I will consider any VHS tape speed or Beta.

Tom Whitehouse  
24 Ludwig Street  
Staten Island, NY 10310

I am seeking the "Titanic" episode from the '60s series *Time Tunnel*. I also want the complete "California Jam I" concert that aired in the '70s and features The Eagles, Deep Purple and Emerson, Lake and Palmer. I will reimburse expenses for a high-grade Beta or VHS copy.

John A. Francese  
1876 Carhart Avenue  
Peekskill, NY 10566

I am looking for a copy of the Major Indoor Lacrosse championship game (Phil-

adelphia Wings vs. New England Blazers) that aired on April 13, 1990. My best info says it was only broadcast on the New England Sports Network. I am willing to reimburse costs.

Ken Saroka  
Box 1215  
Levittown, PA 19058

I am a *Leave It to Beaver* collector looking for four episodes: "Beaver and Gilbert," "Wally's Orchid," "Beaver's Team" and "Beaver the Bunny." I'm willing to pay reproduction and tape costs. I have all the other episodes if anybody needs them.

George Rech  
Box 961  
North Cape May, NJ 08204

Please help! My tapes of the mini-series *Lonesome Dove* were damaged in last October's earthquake, and I have been searching ever since to replace them. The show appeared on CBS in February 1989. I have exhausted all my resources and hope to obtain a copy through this new service. I will gladly reimburse expenses.

Vicki Hammer  
158 Harbor Oaks Circle  
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

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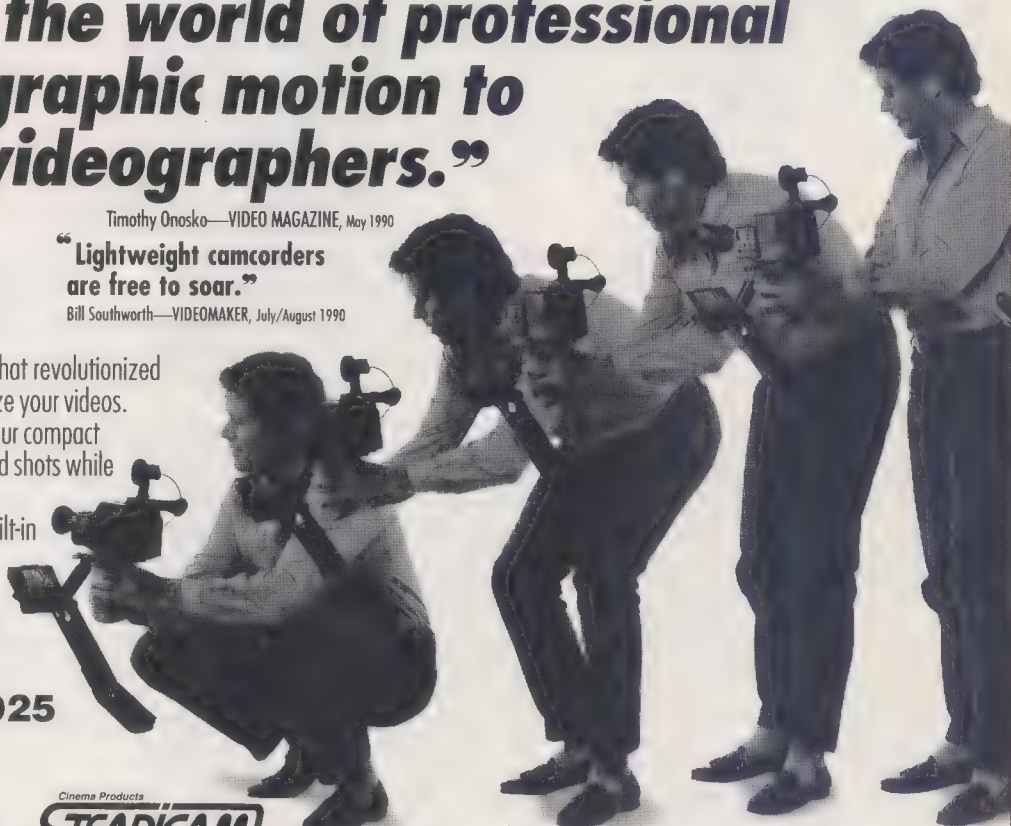
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# YOUR MONEY'S WORTH

BY CHRISTINE BEGOLE

## GRIEF RELIEF

*Manufacturers offer more services than most expect. Here's how to use them.*

**E**arlier this year *Business Week* reported that economists expect the '90s to be the Decade of the Customer—a decade in which people gravitate to companies that spend whatever time and money is necessary to ensure customer satisfaction. Even though it's still early in the decade, we decided to check on the state of customer service at leading video manufacturers.

We found that most will go beyond providing product literature and dealer referrals. In fact, many companies are willing to bend over backward to win your good will, especially if something goes wrong through no fault of your own.

Most customer service representatives are trained to answer a variety of commonly asked questions and to pass technical questions on to specialists. The more complex your question, the more likely you'll be passed along, maybe more than once, in search of an answer. If you want to know how to use two cable boxes to feed five TV sets, or how to add a satellite dish, surround sound or a video enhancer to an existing system, take heart—the answers are there. Prepare to be patient, polite and to the point.

If you have questions before making a purchase, take the time to contact customer service departments of the various brands you're considering. In addition to finding answers, you'll be able to sample their attitudes—something that can't be described in a chart or in pages of product description. Through our own questioning, we discovered seven major types of help that companies can provide:

- **Operating and installing assistance.** This covers clarifications about basic functions as well as operations that may not be in the owner's manual, such as how to successfully link the product to a variety of other components. Most calls to customer service involve operations you can probably do in your sleep—how



to program the VCR is a frequent request. But if your questions are at the complex end of the spectrum, customer service representatives are trained to consult the technical staff to track down answers.

- **You'll get better service if you can boil down your problem to a single sentence.** If the question is fairly technical, suggest that perhaps a technical person should call you back, and be prepared with a phone number where and when you can be easily reached.

- **Comparison shopping.** If you've read previews about a new leading-edge product, most customer service departments can tell you when the product is destined to be on U.S. shelves, and can supply up-to-date information about

features, functions and prices. Within their own brand, they can also clarify differences among models up and down the current product line.

- **Owner's manual replacement.** If you need a new manual, customer service can help. Most video manufacturers keep a supply for recent and current models in stock. For older models, many manufacturers can provide photocopies of manuals which they no longer have in stock.

- **Help with complaints about dealers or authorized service companies.** When things are not going well, customer service departments can put a stop to your feeling like you're being given a run-around. Centrally organized companies are set up to help wheels turn more



quickly and efficiently from headquarters. Decentralized companies give lots of problem-solving authority to regional offices and individual dealers, servicers and distributors.


Customer service should know the fastest way to solve your problem—and will refer you to a person who has enough clout to get the job done.

● **Packing and moving.** If you're faced with moving to a new location and no longer have your components' boxes and packing materials, practically all manufacturers can give you advice on preparing video gear for transit. Sony and Toshiba provide materials upon request, and other companies may have what you need. It's worth a call to find out.

● **Sounding off.** Sony and RCA are two examples of companies that routinely pass along customer comments and criticisms to their design departments. Thus, calling customer service can influence future product designs.

● **Emergency assistance.** Many companies we talked with recounted tales of rescuing people from dire circumstances or helping customers who had truly managed to get rotten deals. For instance, one company told us about a projection TV owner who needed three service calls on his brand-new set in the first three weeks. When he called customer service to complain about needing a fourth visit, the company took the set back and refunded the purchase price. As a result, the customer went out and bought a new set of the same brand,

## 4 Tips For Faster Service



Here are four tips for getting help over the phone from companies or dealers when something goes wrong with one of their products, even if the warranty may already have expired. The basic idea is to keep cool and take notes. If you can do this, you stand a much better chance of getting a company to deal with your problem quickly and effectively.

- **Call when you're calm.** You'll get further, faster if your emotions are under control. Call before you get truly frustrated or, if it's too late for that, postpone the call until you get a grip on yourself.
- **Arm yourself with info.** Before your first call, start a log. Write down the model and serial numbers of the item you're calling about and its date and place of purchase. Summarize the problem in one short sentence, then write it down and use it to start your discussion with customer service.
- **Keep a record of who says what.** Note the name of each person you speak to—as well as the date, the time and any action he or she promises. As you hang up, agree on a date for a follow-up conversation. Setting a specific time often helps others meet their commitments.
- **Try to be reasonable.** Being abusive may make you feel better, but it's not likely to elicit the most useful response. If you're not satisfied with the help you're getting, ask to speak with a supervisor. If you're in an emotional state, hang up and regroup, then call again and ask to speak with someone else.

—CB

which worked just fine.

Companies also mentioned calls about camcorders that go on the blink a few days before some long-awaited event, like a wedding, a birthday party or a vacation. In some cases companies jumped through hoops to get the camcorder repaired in time; in others, loaners were provided while repairs were

underway.

Our moral: Call if you're in trouble. Companies are often willing to give unusual help, especially if the problem involves a manufacturing defect. They want you to feel positive about buying their brand again. And if you give them a chance, they'll work hard to restore your good will. ■

## DON'T GET MAD, GET ON THE PHONE



Here are customer service numbers for major video manufacturers. Most are 800 numbers, which means you won't be charged for the call. The hours, where noted, are in Eastern Standard Time.

**Canon:** 800-892-0020.

**General Electric:** 800-447-1700; 24 hours a day, every day.

**Hitachi:** 800-262-1502 and 213-537-8383.

**JVC:** 800-252-5722 for customer service; 800-537-5722 for service information.

**Mitsubishi:** 714-220-1464; 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Friday. Answering machines take messages on evenings and weekends.

**NEC:** 800-366-5213 and 708-860-0335.

**Panasonic, Quasar and Technics:** 201-348-9090 for Consumer Affairs; 800-447-4700 for service information.

**Philips, Magnavox, Sylvania, Philco and Crosley:** 615-475-0317, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., weekdays.

**Proton:** 800-829-3444, 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**RCA:** 800-336-1900; 24 hours a day, every day.

**Sharp:** 800-526-0264, 201-512-0055 and 800-447-4400 (service information); 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**Sony:** 201-930-7669 on the East Coast, 708-250-7669 in the Midwest, 714-821-7669 on the West Coast.

**Toshiba:** 800-631-3811.

**Zenith:** 708-671-7550; 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., weekdays.



## CAMCORDER

*Edit as you go—the art of live switching*

BY JAMES CARUSO  
AND MAVIS ARTHUR

Most camcorder photogs shoot an event then simply watch the raw footage. Some go to the trouble of editing their tapes into short films, a time-consuming task however much fun it may be. But when it comes to camcorders, one plus one can equal three—especially when planned performances are involved. There's a way you and a friend can link your camcorders to shoot and edit while the action you're snaring actually takes place.

The technique is called live switching, and professionals use it to shoot TV programs all the time. Not only will it give you a more polished tape more quickly, it will sharpen your directing skills and send a heady rush of adrenaline through your system as you experience the challenge of calling shots.

We used live switching to shoot a rehearsal video for a talented new heavy metal band called A.K.A., managed by a friend who goes by the unlikely name of Crockey. The band needed help fine-tuning its act and Crockey challenged us to rise to the occasion. We couldn't resist.

The five members of A.K.A. had written a group of songs they would soon perform live. They were satisfied with the music but were still trying to polish their onstage look. The problem was that they could not see how well their act was working or properly judge its entertainment value. They especially wanted all their body moves to be perfect for this appearance because the band had just gotten its big break. They are the first artists to be signed by a new record label called Elektra Rising, backed by Elektra Records and headed by Van Halen.

Crockey knew that a lot of television shows are shot with two or more cameras connected to a switcher so that

shots from all the cameras can be recorded on one piece of videotape to produce a finished show. A.K.A. wanted to do the same thing so that band members could see themselves as an audience would see them. But the cost of hiring a professional production company to do the job was prohibitive.

The band could have recorded its performance on two isolated camcorders then edited the tapes together, but it

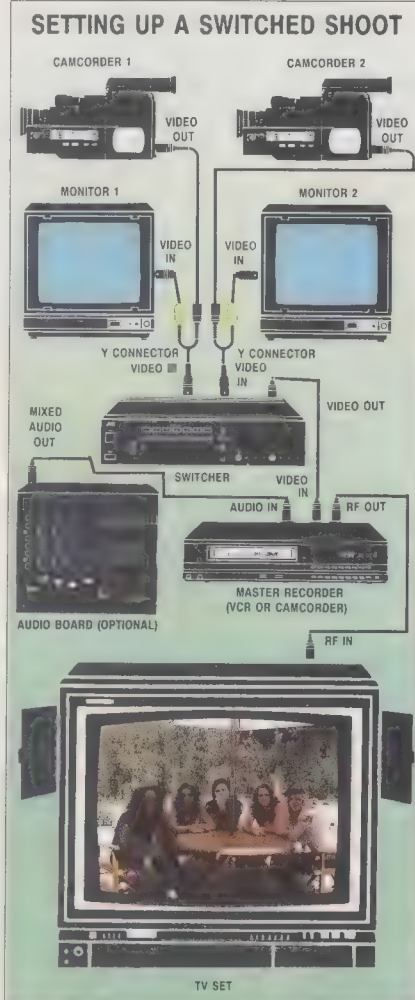
would have taken a lot of time to edit two tapes into a rough edit master. Meanwhile, the performers would be sitting around waiting. In addition, both camcorder operators would be framing their own shots. No one person would be making decisions about the content or framing of individual shots. They might duplicate some shots while missing others entirely. There was just no way to control such a shoot.

A live, switched shoot was the only answer for A.K.A. Indeed, it may well prove to be a useful, inexpensive way for other performance-oriented video buffs to test their acts before going in front of an audience—be it at a community theater, a dance recital or a school play.

Still, switching between camcorders during a performance is a challenge that requires working out a few technical problems and putting up with certain limitations of consumer-grade equipment. For example, there's the lack of synchronization between camcorders, a problem common to all video signals not in sync with each other. This causes a glitch when the director switches camcorders. In our setup, the glitch lasted about 30 frames, or one second. It looked like a vertical roll and appeared in the recording.

If you can put up with this type of minor aberration, here's what you'll need to arrange a two-camera live, switched shoot. First, gather two camcorders, a VCR (or another camcorder), three TV sets or monitors, and a special effects generator (SEG) or any device with two video inputs and one video output. You'll also need two Y connectors, two long video cables and two long audio cables, four short video cables and an audio cable. Gaffer's tape and simple walkie-talkies, preferably the headset type, are also handy to have around.

For the A.K.A. shoot, our "studio cameras" were Ricoh's Hi8 R-800H, which was hand-held, and Canon's 8mm VM-E2N, mounted on a tripod. Both were powered by their AC adapters. Each camcorder was wired with a 20-foot cable that ran from its video-out jack to one arm of its own Y con-



**Rock 'n' Rolling:** You can edit as you shoot by using two camcorders and feeding them through a switcher. Use small TVs to track each camcorder's visuals and an audio mixer for extra sound options.

*James Caruso and Mavis Arthur are the authors of Video Lighting and Special Effects (Prentice Hall, 1990).*



necter. Each Y connector was plugged into the video-in jack of our master control switcher, a Sansui AV-99 SEG. We used gaffer's tape to secure the cables to the camcorders since RCA phono jacks are not really designed for this kind of use.

The second arm of each Y connector was wired to a video monitor so that the director could see the output from each camcorder and tell each operator what shot he wanted. I talked to my camcorder operators through the walkie-talkies, in this case, units from the My First Sony line for kids. Our switcher has two video inputs and two video outputs, so that in its normal configuration it can switch from VCR A to VCR B and vice versa. It also has two video outputs for monitors, one for viewing the shot you are working with and another to monitor any effects the AV-99 generates.

Since a video signal doesn't care if it's going to a monitor or a VCR, we connected the video-out jack for the effects monitor to our recording machine, which was not a VCR but another camcorder, the Magnavox CVK-610.

You'll remember that we had already hooked up our two monitors to the switcher so that we could see the output of the individual camcorders to let us judge what to record on our master tape. We hooked the RF output from the CVK-610 to the RF input on our TV set. This became our switched program monitor.

The audio was simple for us because A.K.A. had a professional audio board, and we just wired the mixed audio out of the board to the audio-in jack on the Magnavox camcorder. If your studio (or

## Don't overlook fades. They can make glitches less obvious.

basement) doesn't have this convenience, use the camcorders' microphones and plug two long audio cables into the two audio inputs on the switcher. Or you can use two wireless mics, and eliminate the extra audio cables.

Just as we thought we were ready to roll tape, we realized the color from our two studio camcorders didn't match even after we white-balanced them. The Canon's picture was a little warmer than the Ricoh's. We fooled the white balance on the Canon by showing it a pink "While you were out" telephone message slip while putting the camcorder in its auto white balance mode. This took care of the video matching problem.

During the shoot, only the CVK-610 was recording. Neither of the two studio camcorders were recording, although they could have if we had wanted them to. Had they recorded, we could have used their tapes to clean glitches on the master tape, to change or add special effects, or just as backup in case something went wrong with the master recording.

If your SEG can handle fades or wipes, don't overlook these transitions when directing your two-camera shoot. They won't eliminate glitches caused by switching, but they can make them less

obvious. Adding such transitions on the run makes live switching a little more complicated, so your timing is crucial to its success.

For a wipe, first wipe out the outgoing signal to video black or another color, although black works best. Next, switch the recording VCR or camcorder to the new incoming video. Then wipe in the new video. Then get set to do it again. You can do the same thing with fades.

In fact, Sima has introduced two simple video switchers that automatically fade video in or out while you manually switch from one source to the other. The basic Ed/it 1, priced at \$129.95, fades video in and out and audio up and down simultaneously. The Ed/it 2, for \$179.95, adds the ability to mix in additional audio either through the mic that comes with the Ed/it 2 or through some other recorded source.

If you want to get the feel of being a professional TV director by calling the shots live, give this two-camera setup a try. Any switching device will work, provided it has two video inputs and at least one video output. We even hooked the two studio camcorders up to an RCA VJM 2023 monitor/receiver and it worked fine. This set has two video inputs, one intended for a VCR and the other for a laserdisc player or a second VCR.

The point of our exercise was to help A.K.A. improve its look. And it succeeded—without the expense of renting pro equipment and hiring a crew. It was also a lot of fun, for all of us. Try it the next time some performers you know need help, or just to experience the excitement of directing. ■

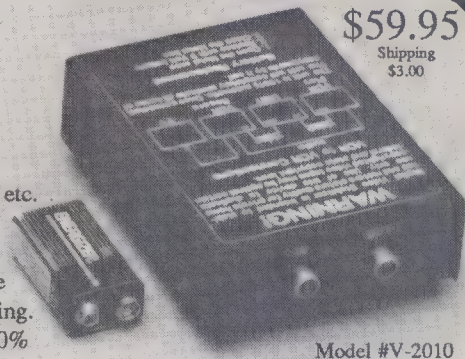
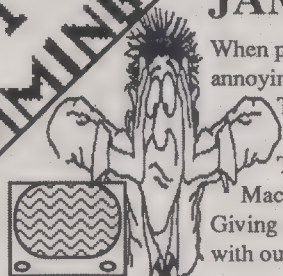
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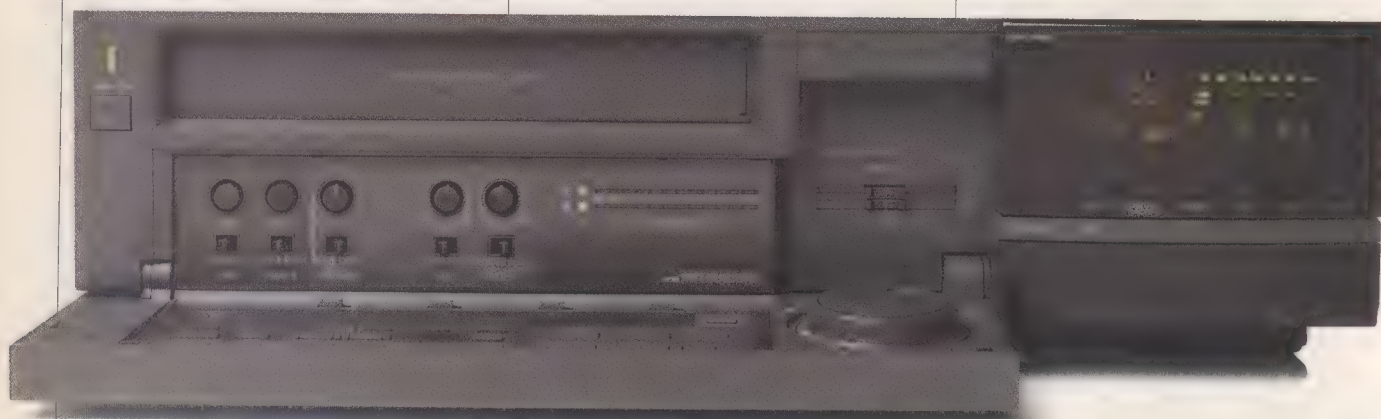
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# VIDEOTESTS



**True Tracking:** The dynamic tracking video heads on Mitsubishi's HS-U82 are designed for cleaner pictures in cue, review, frame advance and slow motion modes.

## VIDEOTEST NUMBER 556

### Mitsubishi Super VHS hi-fi VCR

Mitsubishi's HS-U82 is the long-awaited replacement for the outstanding U80 introduced two years ago. For picture quality, the U82 is well worth the wait, because of improvements in the chroma signal-to-noise ratio. Other characteristics, like audio, retain about the same quality. A few features have taken small

steps backward because they're now controlled by menus instead of discrete buttons. Of course, some users prefer fewer buttons because it makes the control panel less intimidating, but others find menus awkward and slow.

Mitsubishi has taken one major step that may spur the entire industry to action—it supplies a large, comprehensive manual, designed specifically for clarity. The company has also redesigned other manuals in its line, and plans to redo all of them. The U82 manual is not yet perfect, but it deserves special praise.

The feature list is impressive. Un-

usual ones include jog/shuttle dials on both the VCR and the remote control, twin flying erase heads instead of the usual one, two-speed locking search, bi-directional skip search, spot check to see the picture during fast forward and rewind, color and tint adjustment on playback, dynamic tracking, a monochrome color creator and artificial intelligence picture enhancement. The U82 also carries most standard high-end VCR features.

**Description.** The gray and black HS-U82 is a rather large VCR, with a footprint measuring over 16 inches per

#### Mitsubishi HS-U82 S-VHS VCR



#### DATA

**Suggested Price:**  
\$1,699

**Weight:**  
23.9 pounds

**Dimensions:**  
4-3/4 x 16-3/4 x 16-1/4 inches (h/w/d)

**Power Requirements:**  
120 VAC, 60 Hz

**Power Consumption:**  
47 W

**Tape Formats:**  
S-VHS, VHS

**Tape Speeds:**  
record—SP, EP; play-back—SP, LP, EP

**Video Heads:** 4

**Slow Motion:**  
from jog dials—variable speed; from shuttle rings—2/3x, 1/3x, 1/6x,

1/10x and 1/20x; fewer options on remote control

**Speed Play:**  
from either shuttle ring—2x forward, 3x reverse; VCR shuttle ring only—3x forward

**Rapid Search:**  
remote shuttle ring—5x and 70x, SP; 10x and 200x, EP; VCR shuttle ring—5x and 10x, SP; 10x and 30x, EP

**Cue & Review (Search):**  
two-speed, up to 30x at EP

**Fast Forward/Rewind Time:**  
less than 2 min. for T-120

**Remote:**  
IR wireless with jog/shuttle dial, activator and indicator; buttons

for menu, power/programmed record, video/TV, TV operation, VCR operation, audio up and down, video up and down, volume up and down, channel up and down, last channel recall, mute, record, data onscreen, stop, pause/still, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search; under compartment lid—buttons for VCR A, VCR B, skip search, index minus, index plus, OTR, input select, repeat, antenna A/B, cancel, enter and 10-digit keypad

**Counter Digits:**  
5—hrs:mins:secs.

**Counter Memory:**  
no, but access by counter number is possible

**Program Start Loca-**

**tor/Index/Cue:**  
index and time search

**Linear Audio:**  
mono

**Hi-Fi AFM Audio:**  
stereo

**Tuning Method:**  
frequency synthesis

**Channel Selectors:**  
VCR—programmable up/down scan; remote—scan plus direct access

**Preset Method:**  
auto program with manual add and erase

**Broadcast Tuning Range:**  
2 to 13, 14 to 69

**Cable Tuning Range:**  
2 to 13, 5A, A-5 to A-1, A to W, W+1 to W+84

**AFT:**  
always on

**Timer:**  
8-event/4-week

**Special Features:**  
dual flying erase heads, auto play speed select, still frame, frame advance (from jog dials), remote pause (from edit jack), separate eject, audio dub, video dub, insert edit, auto rewind, channel lock, auto channel-change, visible fast forward and rewind by holding down button in each mode

**Accessories:**  
remote control with batteries, stereo audio cable, S-video cable and 75-ohm antenna cable

#### RESULTS

**Horizontal Resolution:**  
S-VHS—over 400 lines; VHS—240-250 lines



side. A small black area at the lower right covers input jacks for video, S-video, stereo microphone and a headphone jack with level control. The slim gray bar above holds LED indicators for S-VHS, digital tracking, stereo, SAP, video dub and audio dub. The large black area covers a comprehensive display. The only exposed control is an activator button for the power button inside the panel.

The back wall of the control compartment holds rotary controls for slow adjust, still adjust, manual tracking, color and tint. There are also switches for high-speed search, VCR A/VCR B remote, auto/manual tracking, paint (which converts the picture to monochromatic colors) and S-video/video input selection. Further right sit stereo audio level indicators and sliders for left and right audio record level.

The inner surface of the door holds the jog/shuttle and switches for T-120/T-160 tape remaining, S-detail (used when an S-cable is plugged into the output), hi-fi/normal mix and AC online. Other buttons include timer reset, program record, input select, audio monitor, video/TV, record speed, index search, data onscreen, channel up and

*continued on page 32*

**Luminance S/N, Unweighted:**  
S-VHS—43.8 dB, SP;  
42.8 dB, EP

**Luminance S/N, Weighted:**  
S-VHS—50.4 dB, SP;  
49 dB, EP

**Video S/N, Unweighted:**  
VHS—46 dB, SP; 46.3 dB, EP

**Video S/N, Weighted:**  
VHS—50.1 dB, SP;  
51.5 dB, EP

**Chroma AM S/N:**  
49.8 dB, SP; 45.7 dB, EP

**Chroma PM S/N:**  
46.3 dB, SP; 42.8 dB, EP

**Audio Frequency Response:**

hi-fi—20 Hz-20 kHz,  
+1.4/-2.3 dB; linear (-3  
dB)—100 Hz-12 kHz,  
SP; 80 Hz-5 kHz, EP

**HI-FI Dynamic Range:**  
90.2 dB

**Linear Audio S/N:**  
43.6 dB

**Audio Distortion:**  
hi-fi—0.3%; linear—  
1.2%

#### RATINGS

**Picture Quality:**  
excellent

**Audio Quality:**  
excellent

**Operational Ease:**  
very good/excellent

**Overall Performance:**  
very good/excellent

#### VIDEOTEST NUMBER 557

### Fisher 8mm fuzzy logic camcorder

Although the Sanyo/Fisher Corporation was one of the earliest to field 8mm equipment, it is not usually associated with breakthrough technology. The Fisher FVC-880 is different because it is among the first camcorders to use fuzzy logic. Fuzzy logic is a form of artificial intelligence that works with analog-type information instead of the usual yes/no pattern of digital logic.

Fisher's new Studio-Standard model applies fuzzy logic to autofocus problems. A field of view typically contains objects at varying distances from the lens. Digital logic can focus on only one object at a time. When confronted with multiple subjects, most camcorders with digital autofocus go crazy, focusing first on one object then another. This is often referred to as hunting. In contrast, fuzzy logic looks at many objects at different distances, chooses a compromise setting and stays put—it doesn't seesaw in and out of focus.

We've always favored leaving the autofocus off and occasionally using the one-shot AF button. Fisher's application of fuzzy logic for focusing is a step forward but it must now be perfected. The FVC-880 also uses fuzzy logic for auto iris, where it seems to work almost perfectly as well as unobtrusively.

The FVC-880's radical new shape is apparent long before a user discovers the benefits of fuzzy logic. The camcorder is



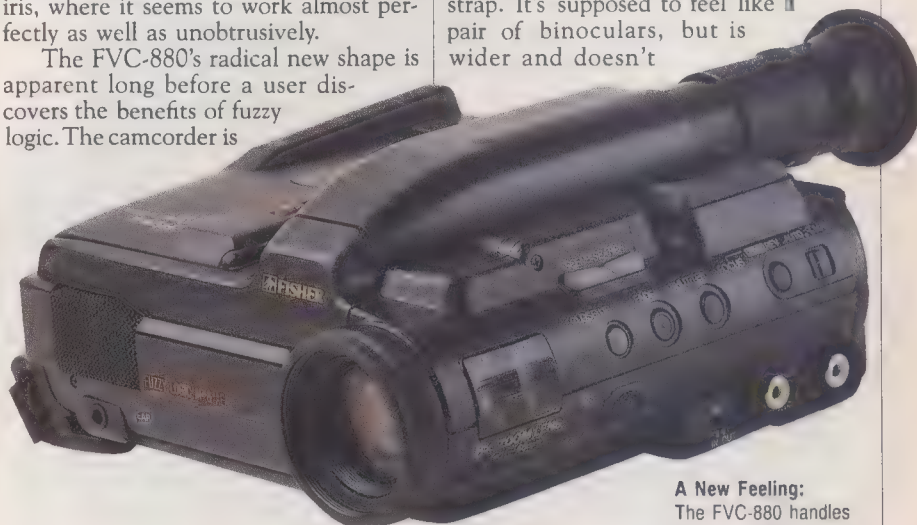
**Flat & Fuzzy:** The FVC-880 is one of the first camcorders to use fuzzy logic circuitry.

wide and flat—the user holds it somewhat like binoculars. Average users should find it very comfortable. Fisher wisely placed the zoom rocker on the left side to force two-handed operation, which steadies the picture. However, taping for extended periods tires the arms, and it is awkward to tuck the elbows into the waist for extra support.

The remainder of the design is relatively basic, with six shutter speeds up to 1/4000-second, completely automatic white balance, optional manual iris (but no backlight compensator), auto fade, edit search, one-title memory, eight-color superimposition and date imprinting.

A supplied remote lets the operator get into the picture and control basic functions from there, however, zoom cannot be controlled from the remote. The new design and control layout is ■ great first step in a new direction.

**Description.** The FVC-880 looks like a large, black sandwich with a wrist strap. It's supposed to feel like ■ pair of binoculars, but is wider and doesn't



**A New Feeling:**  
The FVC-880 handles like a set of binoculars.



bend in the center. Both sides are rounded. The camera section sits to the left.

Along that side are the focusing window; buttons for macro, auto fade, shutter speed and one-touch AF; and an auto/manual focus switch. There's also an indented rotary control for manual iris. A bulge near the back holds jacks for video and audio, a switch that determines whether they function as inputs or outputs, and a DC out jack for the RF adapter. The top of the left edge holds two rockers, a large one for zoom and a smaller one that delivers normal-speed scene search in record mode.

The electronic viewfinder sits on top, and is hinged at its forward end. The viewing hood must be extended and locked with a twist before the user focuses the magnifier. The camera/off/video standby switch occupies the center rear of the top and a bump extending forward holds buttons for counter memory and reset, date and adjust, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, stop, pause/still and record.

A catch on the right side lets the user raise the top right side for access to the cassette hatch. A blue eject button hides inside, along with the cassette car-

riage, which slides out before popping up.

The front holds the microphone, an earphone jack and the lens. The lens cap stores on the security strap while shooting. Most of the rear panel is normally covered by the battery, which slides onto grooves. To its right sits the red run/stop trigger; to its left, buttons for title on/off, memory and color.

The title memory captures a high-contrast image that can be superimposed on a picture in one of eight colors during record or playback.

The remote control is small, simple and light, with all camcorder controls except start/stop grouped at the front. This group comprises buttons for title on/off, memory and color; counter reset and memory, and date. The VCR controls further back include a pair of record buttons and others for pause/still, minus and plus scene search, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search. Furthest down are buttons for stop and camcorder start/stop.

**Operation.** Using the camcorder is easy if you have a large hand. If your hand is small, you may have to stretch a bit to reach some controls. The right hand provides support and operates the

start/stop button. The left operates zoom, scene search and optional manual controls, including macro.

Although the fuzzy logic achieves acceptable, if not perfect, focus, it takes almost four seconds to move from really distant objects to those about four feet from the lens. Shooting closer requires hitting the macro button. White balance is always automatic, but focus and iris can switch to manual mode.

Title and dating operations are straightforward, but the adjustment buttons and counter controls are tiny. The recorder controls are also small, but the remote makes these functions more accessible.

On iris, the fuzzy logic works effectively and unobtrusively, as automatic functions should operate. On focus, it is slow, and travels noticeably past optimum focus before backing up to the correct setting. We rate operational ease as very good, but without raves for fuzzy logic. We're somewhat forgiving because it is a first application. We expect it to get a lot better, which it must before we would be completely happy with it.

**Performance.** The FVC-880 delivers 250 lines of horizontal resolution and an unweighted video signal-to-noise



*The new  
Canon E57  
is simply  
breathtaking.*



ratio of 40.3 decibels. The weighted video S/N is 47.6 dB, while the chroma AM S/N is 44.6 dB and the chroma PM S/N is 38.7 dB. Under low light conditions it delivers 50 IRE units at 7.3 lux, but the autofocus is unreliable at these levels. The resolution boosts an otherwise average picture to good.

The audio frequency response of the mono AFM track is 20 hertz to 10 kilohertz, +1.3/-3 dB, down 6.7 dB at 20 kHz. The dynamic range is 80.9 dB and the total harmonic distortion is 0.4 percent. There is no PCM audio. This audio performance is typical for 8mm camcorders, and we rate it as good compared to camcorder sound in general.

**Conclusion.** The FVC-880 is unusual in design and introduces fuzzy logic applications that hold great promise for the future. Picture and audio quality of the unit we tested is just good, but ease of operation is very good. We like the feel and could get accustomed to the layout. Overall performance is good to very good. The suggested price of \$1,300 is slightly pricey, but typical for a design with so much new technology. It is certainly a camcorder to merit a tryout when you're shopping. It could be your dream camcorder.

## Fisher FVC-880 Fuzzy Logic 8mm Camcorder

### DATA

**Suggested Price:**  
\$1,300

**Weight:**  
1.8 pounds without cassette or battery

**Dimensions:**  
3.1 x 7.4 x 8.4 inches (h/w/d)

**Power Requirements:**  
6 VDC

**Power Consumption:**  
6.5 W

**Image Sensor:**  
1/2-inch CCD

**Lens:**  
1/2, 6x (11-66 mm)  
power zoom with macro

**Filter Diameter:** 37mm

**Minimum Focusing Distance:**  
4 feet; 0.6 feet in macro

**Autofocus:**  
automatic with fuzzy logic, switchable to manual

**Auto Fade:**  
picture and sound,  
about 6 seconds

**Shutter:**  
1/60 (normal), 1/100,  
1/250, 1/1000, 1/2000,  
1/4000-second

**Viewfinder:**  
EVF with onscreen indicators for pause, record, low tape, dew, low battery, cassette anti-erase tab set and tape end

**Viewfinder Controls:**  
operating position, focus, and tilt up to vertical position

**VCR functions:**  
rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, stop, pause/still and record

**Microphone:**  
omnidirectional electret condenser

**Jacks:**  
in/out switchable audio and video, DC out for RF adapter, earphone and external mic

**Tape Format:** 8mm

**Tape Speeds:** SP only

**Video Heads:** 4

**Cue & Review (Search):** 13x

**Fast Forward/Rewind Time:**  
6 mins. for 120 min. cassette

**Remote:**  
IR wireless with buttons for date, counter memory, counter reset, title on/off, title color, title memorize, record (2), start/stop, play, fast forward/search, rewind/search, scene search minus and plus, and stop

**Counter Digits:**  
5—hrs:mins:secs.

**Hi-Fi AFM Audio:** mono

**Special Features:**  
auto white balance, flying erase head, still frame, separate eject (under tape compartment flap), counter memory, insert edit

**Accessories:**  
remote control, AC adapter/charger, 55-min battery, lithium clock battery, power connecting cord, channel 3/4 RF adapter, antenna cable, 75/300-ohm antenna transformer and shoulder strap

antenna transformer and shoulder strap

### RESULTS

**Horizontal Resolution:**  
250 lines

**Video S/N, Unweighted:**  
40.3 dB

**Video S/N, Weighted:**  
47.6 dB

**Chroma AM S/N:**  
44.6 dB

**Chroma PM S/N:**  
38.7 dB

**Audio Frequency Response:**  
20 Hz-10 kHz, +1.3/-3 dB, -6.7 dB at 20 kHz

**Dynamic Range:**  
80.9 dB

**Audio Distortion:**  
0.4%

### RATINGS

**Picture Quality:** good

**Audio Quality:** good

**Operational Ease:**  
very good

**Overall Performance:**  
good/very good

In fact, the E57 is so full of features, yet so fully automatic, it can turn any moment into breathtaking video.

Its 10x power zoom lens gets you in close when you're far away. It comes with an attachable video light for beautiful color rendition while shooting in low light situations. The 180° FlexiGrip™ lets you catch action from hard-to-reach angles. And Canon's expert lens crafting means sharp, brilliant color images every time.

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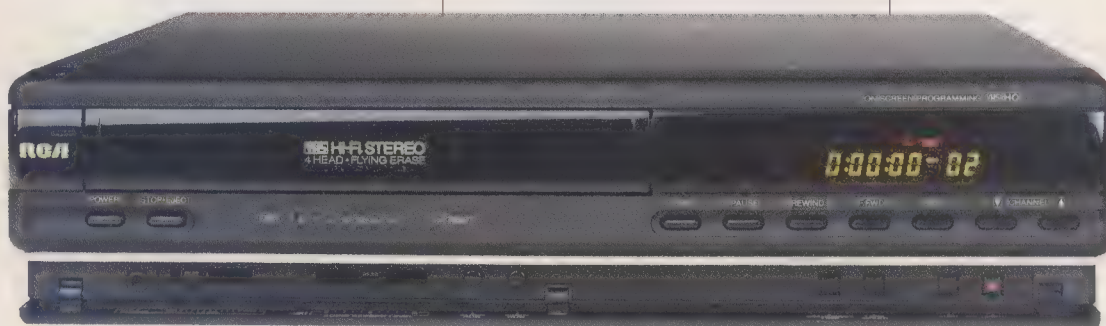
For additional information, circle No. 13 on Reader Service Card.



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of Little League Baseball.



# VIDEOTESTS



**Shuttle Sale:**  
The RCA VR685HF is one of the lowest-priced VCRs to feature a jog/shuttle dial on the remote control.

## VIDEOTEST NUMBER 558

### RCA hi-fi VCR with editing features

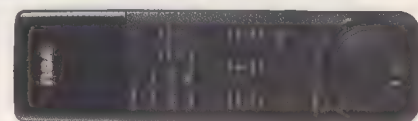
RCA's VR685HF should appeal to those who want good editing facilities but do not want to invest in a top-of-the-line VCR. It has a flying erase head for glitch-free edits, a jog/shuttle dial for precise location of edit points, audio dub to the mono linear track, and video dub, which erases the hi-fi audio.

The VR685HF includes edit in and edit out control jacks, successors to the synchro edit jack, that let this machine be either master or slave in a dubbing/editing operation—it can either send or receive synchro edit commands. The programmable edit controller automat-

ically assembles up to six scenes with an onscreen table to assist in marking the start and end points of each scene.

Even for those who are not interested in editing, this is a desirable VCR, because it is attractive, easy to use and versatile. It is rather small and light for a full-featured machine. The simplified front panel is not forbidding and the timer is among the easiest to set, thanks to simple onscreen prompts. Its 181-channel, cable-compatible MTS stereo tuner automatically programs all active channels, and will decode and record SAP. Simulcast recording is possible.

Automatic functions include power on when a cassette is inserted, switchable auto play if the tab is missing, rewind/power off at the end of the tape and selectable repeat. Most functions are available only through the remote. Many operate through onscreen menus.



The user can also call up an abbreviated onscreen instruction manual. An automatic head cleaner minimizes the need for manual head cleaning.

**Description.** The VR685HF is dark gray with a shiny black band camouflaging the cassette hatch and display. Below the black band sits a row of indicators for hi-fi level and exposed buttons for power, stop/eject, play, pause, rewind/search, fast forward/search, VCR/TV, channel down and channel up. A lower band conceals a compartment containing a headphone jack, plus sliders for headphone level and left and right audio record level. The compart-

*continued on page 98*

#### RCA VR685HF VHS VCR

##### DATA

**Suggested Price:**  
\$649

**Weight:**  
10.6 pounds

**Dimensions:**  
3-1/2 x 14-3/4 x 12-5/8  
inches (h/w/d)

**Power Requirements:**  
120 VAC, 60 Hz

**Power Consumption:**  
21 W

**Tape Speeds:**  
SP, LP, SLP

**Video Heads:** 4

**Slow Motion:**  
buttons or jog/shuttle  
dial on remote; variable  
1/7x to 1/30x

**Rapid Search:**  
using shuttle ring; SP—  
3x, 7x, 10x; SLP—9x,  
21x, 30x

**Cue & Review (Search):**  
locking—7x, SP; 21x,  
SLP non locking—10x,  
SP; 30x, SLP

**Fast Forward/Rewind**  
**Time:** 4-1/2 min. for T-120

**Remote:**  
IR wireless with jog/  
shuttle dial plus indica-  
tor; exposed buttons for  
jog/shuttle activate, TV,  
VCR 1, VCR 2, off/  
power, TV/VCR input,  
display, clear, volume  
up and down, channel  
up and down, memory,  
time remaining, previ-  
ous channel, mute,  
rewind/search, stop,

fast forward/search,  
frame advance, pause,  
play, record and auto  
edit; and concealed  
buttons for off/power,  
TV, VCR 1, VCR 2,  
program, clear, memo-  
ry, help, display, index,  
time search, input, pre-  
vious channel, 10-digit  
keypad, 100. 2x, slow,  
slow speed up and  
down, tracking up and  
down, auto tracking and  
tape (record) speed

**Counter Digits:**  
5—hrs:mins:secs.

**Program Start**  
**Locator/Index/Cue:**  
index with auto mark  
and time search by  
counter display

**Auto Functions:**  
power on, play, rewind/

off and repeat

**Linear Audio:** mono

**Hi-Fi AFM Audio:** stereo

**Tuning Method:**  
frequency synthesis

**Channel Selectors:**  
programmable scan on  
VCR, scan plus direct  
access on remote

**Broadcast Tuning**  
**Range:**

2 to 13, 14 to 69

**Cable Tuning Range:**  
2 to 13, A to W, W+1  
to W+84, A-5, A-4, A-3

**Timer:**  
8-program/1-year

**Special Features:**  
flying erase head, auto  
play speed select, still  
frame, counter memory,  
audio dub, video dub,

channel lock, auto  
channel-change

**Accessories:**  
remote control with bat-  
teries, 75-ohm RF  
cable, 75/300-ohm an-  
tenna adapter and  
VHF/UHF splitter

#### RESULTS

**Horizontal Resolution:**  
240-250 lines

**Video S/N, Unweighted:**  
46.3 dB, SP; 45.5 dB,  
LP; 43.7 dB, SLP

**Video S/N, Weighted:**  
53.6 dB, SP; 52.9 dB,  
LP; 51.4 dB, SLP

**Chroma AM S/N:**  
45.3 dB, SP; 41.6 dB,  
LP; 41.4 dB, SLP

**Chroma PM S/N:**  
41.4 dB, SP; 37.9 dB,  
LP; 38.8 dB, SLP

#### Audio Frequency Response:

hi-fi—20 Hz-15 kHz,  
+0.3/-3.0, down 5.0 dB  
at 20 kHz; linear (-3  
dB)—80 Hz-12 kHz,  
SP; 80 Hz-5 kHz, LP;  
80 Hz-4 kHz, SLP

**Hi-Fi Dynamic Range:**  
82.4 dB

**Audio S/N:** 43.3 dB

**Audio Distortion:**  
hi-fi—0.4%; linear—1.2%

#### RATINGS

**Picture Quality:**  
very good/excellent

**Audio Quality:**  
very good

**Operational Ease:**  
very good/excellent

**Overall Performance:**  
very good/excellent



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# VIDEOTESTS



**Screen Surprise:** When playing CDs or the audio portion of CD-Videos, Panasonic's LX-200 displays onscreen level meters for left and right audio channels.

## VIDEOTEST NUMBER 559

### Panasonic combi player

The LX-200 is a significant new combi player because it is one of the first two to carry the Panasonic brand. Although it is the more economical of the two, it boasts many sophisticated features, including CD/CD-Video/LD capability and automatic side changing for laser-discs recorded on both sides. It accepts

12-, 8-, 5- and 3-inch discs, and can switch between the video and audio only parts of a 5-inch CD-V disc.

For CAV discs, it offers frame, chapter, index and selected point access plus scan, programmed play, random play, programmed random play and repeat with both front panel and optional on-screen displays to guide the user. For CLV discs and CDs it accesses segments by time instead of frame numbers.

On discs with both digital and analog audio tracks, users can switch between those tracks, and listen to either the left or the right channel through

both speakers. This is important for mono programs with different information on each channel.

The LX-200's CAV effects include still frame, bi-directional frame advance (step) and variable-speed playback ranging from 3x to 1/90x in ten steps. The scan system operates at a low speed for the first two seconds, then continues in the chosen direction at a higher speed. With scanning and the various quick access modes, a user is never more than a minute and a half from any selection on one side. A user can also select sides directly, then use one of the other access

#### Panasonic LX-200 Combi Player



#### DATA

**Suggested Price:**  
\$850

**Weight:**  
20.3 pounds

**Dimensions:**  
5 x 17 x 16-3/8 inches  
(h/w/d)

**Power Requirements:**  
120 VAC, 50-60 Hz

**Power Consumption:**  
41 W

**Disc Formats:**  
3-inch CD single, 5-inch  
CD and CDV, 8-inch  
LD and LD single, and  
12-inch LD (LV)

**Disc Speeds:**  
CD, CLV, CAV

**Play Speed Select:**  
automatic

**Still Frame:**  
LD, CAV discs only

**Frame Advance:**  
bi-directional—LD, CAV  
discs only

**Multi-Speed Motion:**  
bi-directional—3x, 2x,  
1x, 1/2x, 1/4x, 1/8x,  
1/16x, 1/30x (1 frame/1  
second), 1/60x, 1/90x;  
LD, CAV discs only

**Rapid Search:**  
by custom index,  
frame, time, chapter or  
track depending on disc  
codes

**Cue & Review  
(Search):**  
3x for the first 2 sec-  
onds, then 90x (approx.)

**Remote:**  
IR wireless with buttons  
for power, open/close,  
side A, side B, display,  
time mode, program,  
recall, clear, mode, 10-  
digit keypad, +10, step  
forward, still/stop, step  
reverse, reverse scan,  
play, forward scan,

chapter/track skip re-  
verse, pause, chapter/  
track skip forward,  
speed minus, speed  
plus, multi-speed re-  
verse, multi-speed  
forward, repeat, A-B re-  
peat, stop, CD-V/AV,  
random play, audio lev-  
el, audio select and  
D/A-CX

**Counter Digits:**  
frame—5; time—4,  
mins:secs.; chapter/  
track—2 and 20 dis-  
crete indicators;  
index—2

**Counter Memory/  
Locator:**  
points A and B with re-  
peat between points,  
and start of any side,  
chapter/track, index,  
frame or time

**Analog Audio:**  
FM stereo

**Digital Audio:**  
stereo

**Accessories:**  
remote control with bat-  
teries, power cord,  
S-video cable, video  
cable and stereo audio  
cable

#### RESULTS

**Horizontal Resolution:**  
425 lines

**Luminance S/N,  
Unweighted:**  
48.7 dB

**Luminance S/N,  
Weighted:**  
50.9 dB

**Video S/N,  
Unweighted:**  
45.4 dB

**Video S/N, Weighted:**  
47.9 dB

**Chroma AM S/N:**  
40.2 dB

**Chroma PM S/N:**  
41.3 dB

**Audio Frequency  
Response:**  
digital—10 Hz-20 kHz,  
+2.4/-1.4 dB; analog—  
20 Hz-20 kHz,  
+0.7/-1.7 dB

**Audio S/N:**  
analog—74.1 dB; digi-  
tal—over 103 dB, our  
limit

**Dynamic Range:**  
digital—97 dB

**Audio Distortion:**  
0.01%

#### RATINGS

**Picture Quality:**  
excellent/very good

**Audio Quality:**  
very good/excellent

**Operational Ease:**  
excellent

**Overall Performance:**  
excellent/very good



methods. The LX-200 offers an excellent collection of options.

**Description.** The LX-200 is grayish black with silver and gold accents. The disc tray near the top of the front panel is almost centered. The power button and remote sensor sit to the left. At the right are buttons for play, open/close, pause and stop, with a ten-digit keypad and a +10 button. The pedestal at the bottom holds a quarter-inch headphone jack, a headphone level control and buttons for forward and reverse scan, forward and reverse chapter/track skip, program, clear, side A and side B.

The rear panel holds a socket for the detachable power cord, output connectors for S-video, optical audio, standard stereo audio and video, F-connectors for VHF in and out and a channel 3/4 RF output selector.

The remote control groups buttons by function. Furthest forward are power and open/close. An L-shaped group below contains buttons for display, side and search options. Next to these are a ten-digit keypad and a +10 button for programming, and index and search functions. The middle group contains buttons for play, pause, still/step, forward and reverse pairs for frame advance, scan and chapter/track skip; and buttons for playback speed and direction, repeat play, A-B repeat, random play and stop.

**Operation.** The LX-200 is extremely easy to hook up and use. It can be connected to the audio and video or S-video jacks of a monitor/receiver—or to a standard TV set by routing the VHF signal from the antenna through the player. The LX-200 output automatically switches from the RF source to the player output when a disc is playing.

All the basic operations can be handled from either the front panel or the remote. Scan visibly searches desired portions of the disc, and is the only special effect that works on all discs. A user can play CAV discs at ten speeds, including an unusual 1/60x (one frame every two seconds).

Out-of-sequence playback of chapters or tracks, either programmed or random play, is possible on discs with those codes in the table of contents. The LX-200 can also repeat a single chapter/track, a side, both sides, a program, a random play sequence, a programmed random play sequence and a segment the user selects between points A and B.

**Performance.** The LX-200 produces an exceedingly good picture marred only by a tendency to roll when searching CLV discs. Its horizontal resolution is about 425 lines with an unweighted luminance signal-to-noise

*continued on page 106*

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# MITSUBISHI

continued from page 25

down, eject, repeat, one-touch record controls, jog/shuttle activation and the usual transport controls.

The remote control operates two Mitsubishi VCRs and a Mitsubishi TV. Its top is divided into three areas. The lowest contains the jog/shuttle dial, its LED indicator, the activator button, and a button that calls up the main menu. The middle area has buttons for power/programmed record, video/TV, TV and VCR operation, audio function up and down, video function up and down, volume and channel up and down, last channel recall, mute, record, data onscreen and transport controls.

The front portion swings upward to reveal buttons for VCR A, VCR B, skip search, index minus and plus, OTR, input select, repeat, antenna A/B, cancel, enter and ten-digit keypad.

**Operation.** Using the HS-U82 is a little complicated, partly because it has so many features but partly because of the new manual. The menu system eliminates buttons that would otherwise clue a user in to some features.

The somewhat forbidding manual lists some features under common names, others under uncommon ones and others not at all. For example, playback of LP tapes is apparently not mentioned. The manual, although accurate, reads like a cross between a school textbook and a sophisticated cookbook. The best bet for learning the machine is trial and error using a spare tape.

After learning the machine, the user will be pleased with how well many of the features operate, especially the very fast search speed, tuning, timer programming, the data screen and the multiple-device control capability. Other operations, like menu selections and jog/shuttle adjustments, can be awkward if the user is accustomed to more straightforward VCRs. Despite these comments, we rate ease of operation as very good to excellent.

**Performance.** The HS-U82 delivers over 400 lines of resolution in S-VHS and 240 to 250 lines in VHS. The unweighted luminance signal-to-noise ratio in S-VHS is 43.8 decibels at SP and 42.8 dB at EP, while the weighted luminance S/N is 50.4 dB at SP and 49 dB at EP. The unweighted video S/N in VHS is 46 dB at SP and 46.3 dB at EP.

The weighted video S/N is 50.1 dB at SP and 51.5 dB at EP.

The chroma AM S/N is 49.8 dB at SP and 45.7 dB at EP, while the chroma PM S/N is 46.3 dB at SP and 42.8 dB at EP. The luminance S/N could stand slight improvement, but the chroma measurements are exceedingly high. Picture quality is excellent.

The audio frequency response of the hi-fi tracks is 20 Hertz to 20 kilohertz, +1.4/-2.3 dB, with a dynamic range of 90.2 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 0.3 percent. The frequency response of the mono linear track at the -3 dB points is 100 Hz to 12 kHz at SP and 80 Hz to 5 kHz at EP with an S/N of 43.6 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 1.2 percent. Audio quality is excellent.

**Conclusion.** The HS-U82 has excellent picture and sound which justify its \$1,699 price and very good to excellent ease of operation. Some of the features one expects on a top-grade VCR are absent or buried in menus, making them less accessible. The manual deserves an A for effort but needs work. Overall performance is excellent for casual users, but only very good for sophisticated users. It is an excellent source machine for dubbing.

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EDITED BY BRIAN CLARK

## NEW PRODUCTS



### Zenith introduces VHS-C camcorder

Zenith's VM6400 VHS Compact camcorder uses a half-inch CCD with 270,000 pixels to produce 330 lines of resolution. The f/1.4 lens has a variable speed 8:1 power zoom. White balance and backlight compensation are automatic. Editing features include assemble edit control, zero frame memory and counter memory, which indexes points on the tape for fast access. The 6400 will record in SP or EP and has recording settings for a quarter, a half and one-second intervals. The camcorder has a 3-lux rating.

**Price:** not available.

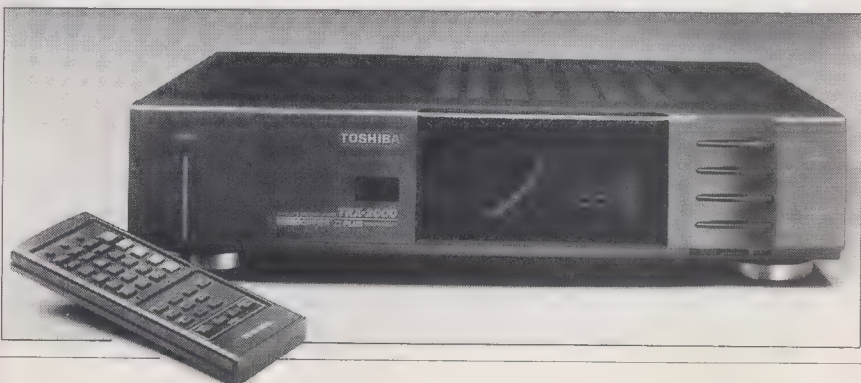
For additional information, circle No. 153 on Reader Service Card.

### Toshiba IRD features S-video output

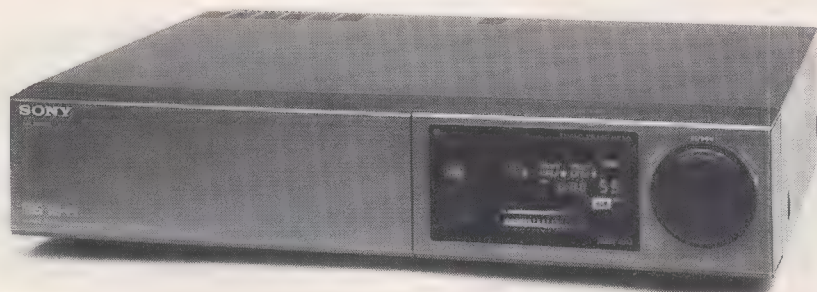
Toshiba's TRX-2000 integrated receiver/descrambler has an S-video output that sends only S-video signals to components for an improved picture. More than 100 channels are factory-programmed into 12 categories. Dual audio/video outputs permit recording one program while watching another. Onscreen displays contain information on a satellite's name and transponder, plus audio information and memory data, all of which can be adjusted via the remote control from any room thanks to the remote's built-in UHF transmitter. Both C- and Ku-band signals are accepted, and the unit contains a VideoCipher II Plus descrambler module.

**Price:** \$1,949.

For additional information, circle No. 154 on Reader Service Card.







## Sony VHS deck features front-panel inputs

Video and left/right audio inputs on the front panel make viewing camcorder tapes simple with the Sony SLV-676 VHS VCR. High-speed rewind takes less than 2-1/2 minutes on a T-120 tape. A shuttle dial controls freeze, frame-by-frame advance, slow motion, 2x play and picture search in forward and reverse. Editing features include a flying erase head and synchro edit with pre-roll. Other features include VHS hi-fi sound, stereo broadcast reception and digital audio tracking.

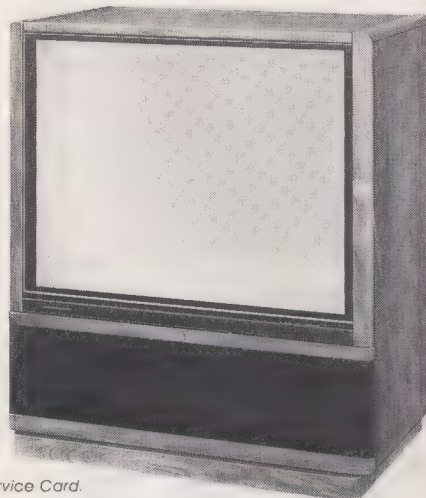
**Price:** \$700.

For additional information, circle No. 159 on Reader Service Card.

## GE presents large-screen projection TV

A digital comb filter is among the key elements in GE's 46GW950 46-inch projection TV set. The set's advanced optics include a high-performance first surface mirror and a multi-element screen. Other features include a 178-channel tuner, MTS broadcast stereo with SAP, 10-watts-per-channel stereo amplifiers, a 13-jack monitor panel with an S-video connector, commercial skip and auto programming. There are on-screen displays for time and channels, as well as a sleep timer. The set comes with a 38-button GE universal remote that operates many different VCR and cable box brands.

**Price:** \$2,299.



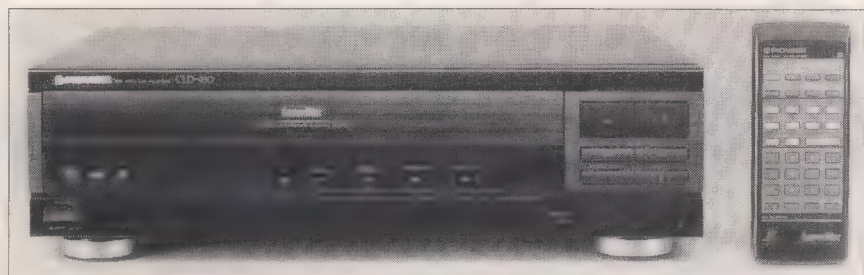
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## Pioneer offers economical combi player

Pioneer's CLD-980 combination laserdisc/compact disc player produces 425 lines of resolution with a signal-to-noise ratio of 47 decibels. The unit uses a 4x oversampling 18-bit digital filter and twin 16-bit digital-to-analog converters. An intro scan feature plays the first eight seconds of each chapter or track consecutively. Up to 24 chapters or tracks can be programmed.

**Price:** \$500.

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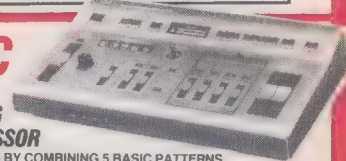
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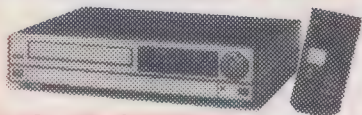
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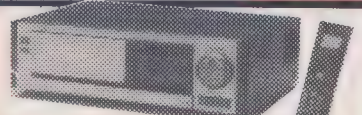
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S-VHS: Optical scanner digitizes graphics for superimposition. Other digital tricks include color correction, fades, wipes, negative/positive, titles, and noise reduction.

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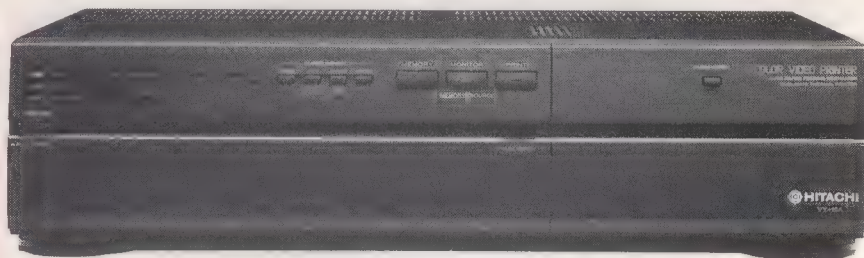


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## NEW PRODUCTS



### Hitachi video printer adds graphics

Hitachi's VY-15A color video printer delivers a color print in 100 seconds. The unit uses a Thermacolor video print kit designed exclusively for the VY-15A by Eastman Kodak. The kit consists of thermal paper and a color cartridge to produce 30 3-1/2 by 5-inch prints. Shots can be taken from any TV, VCR, camcorder or disc player. Dates, titles and illustrations can be superimposed over a frame in eight different colors. All controls and loading bays are on the front of the unit.

Price: \$999.95.

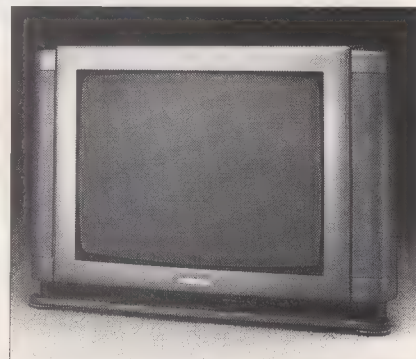
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### Sylvania fields 20-inch portable TV

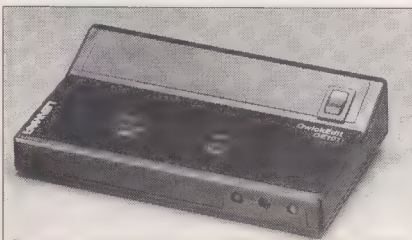
Sylvania's RKS240CH 20-inch TV set is its first portable set to use a comb filter. It also features picture-in-picture, audio/video inputs, variable audio outputs, a sleep timer, onscreen graphics, random access tuning and MTS stereo sound. Sylvania's 3-in-1 SuperRemote — which can run a TV set, a VCR and a cable box — is included.

Price: \$499.95.

For additional information, circle No. 158 on Reader Service Card.



### Editing system uses any wireless remote



Lenmar's QE101 QwickEdit editing system harnesses the wireless remote from any VCR or camcorder to help it control the edit functions of playback and recording decks. It can memorize 100 scenes and 250 commands, and is compatible with all video formats and television standards.

Price: \$249.95.

For additional information, circle No. 160 on Reader Service Card.

### Sunpak delivers lightweight light

Sunpak's Readylite 20 for camcorders weighs only seven ounces and measures 2.3 by 3.9 by 1.9 inches. The Readylite puts out a soft light up to 20 feet away, and runs for about 17 minutes on a charge. The light comes with a replaceable, rechargeable battery that takes five hours to recharge with the included recharger, and attaches to a standard light shoe.

Price: \$64.95.

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## Chinon camcorder offers digital features

Electronic image stabilization is among the unique digital features on Chinon's CV-T124 VHS camcorder. Its digitally enhanced zoom lens offers two high-magnification settings, for 30x and 96x. At the lens' 12x setting, its optical limit, the digital zoom further magnifies an image up to eight times to produce 96x magnification, a level equivalent to the reach of a 720mm lens. A gain-up feature decreases the low-light rating from 5 to 1 lux. The camcorder can also record continuous sound over a still image, and a "mirror" feature puts a live recording on the left side of the frame next to an identical image on the right. Other digital features include strobe and a trio of fades: to black, white and color mosaic. A "power assist" feature allows autofocusing while in manual mode. The kit includes a ten-watt light.

**Price:** \$2,395.

For additional information,  
circle no. 140 on Reader Service Card.



## Video Walkman adds hi-fi stereo

Sony's GV-300 Video Walkman TV/VCR has a four-inch color LCD screen. A user can watch 8mm tapes or use the 99-channel VHF/UHF, cable-compatible tuner. The GV-300 has AFM hi-fi stereo sound. It can also be used as a color monitor when a camcorder viewfinder proves awkward or inconvenient. Other features include onscreen channel display, picture search, still and slow modes and index marking.

**Price:** \$1,400.

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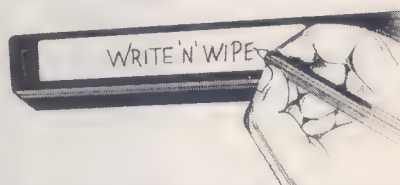
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BY DAVID RANADA

# INSIDE OPTICS HOW CAMCORDERES SEE

*An eye-opening look at an amazing class of lenses and the innovative systems they harness to shape the face of video.*

**E**very video embodies a way of seeing. Even amateur tapes of simple scenes from family life tell us something, if only a little, about the person wielding the camcorder. The videographer's perspective colors even casual shots. And so does the camcorder's: If we know how to look, videos tell us also about the camcorders used to shoot them.

We see first of all how different a video image is from a photograph. Its texture, its field of view, its perspectives, its treatment of motion all signify the presence of a distinctive medium. And less obviously, a distinctive system of optics.

Half camera and half VCR, camcorders are the centaurs of consumer electronics, ingeniously compressing two separate components into compact devices barely larger, in some cases, than the 35mm cameras they are increasingly coming to resemble. Yet, while they share much with 35mm cameras, the cameras inside camcorders are as different from SLRs as electronic keyboards are from pianos.

We're going to take you on an eye-opening excursion into the heart of

camcorder optics—especially if you think you know about video lenses from using 35mm cameras. Video and film cameras exploit a common optical technology by fundamentally different means. The structure of their lenses, the systems that focus them, the way they sense and control light go a long way toward explaining the differences between video images and photographs. They also answer common questions about how camcorders work and yield important insights when it comes time to buy one.

## ANATOMY OF A ZOOM

Zoom lenses are the optical hearts of consumer camcorders. Although they're still specialized options for film cameras, their presence on camcorders is taken for granted. Complex and costly, they give camcorders extraordinary reach and flexibility, yet sometimes weigh no more than a few ounces.

All zooms are made of a multitude of lens elements—up to 12 in a typical design—using a variety of glasses and plastics. Each element has a unique set of curvatures and each plays a specific role in correcting or compensating for lens aberrations that would otherwise occur. Some move almost constantly, at times in opposite directions. Designs for the elements and their arrangement vary

from company to company, yet camcorder zooms share important principles.

Most are divided into three groups of elements: the variator, the relay and the compensator. Variator elements move backward and forward to adjust a lens' focal length. They actually comprise a variable telescope within the larger lens, producing a so-called virtual image, which the relay section—a group of normal, fixed focal-length elements—projects onto a sensor. The compensator elements keep the image in focus on the sensor as the variator shifts back and forth.

Beyond this three-part structure, zoom lenses vary greatly. For example, the elements that focus on a subject can be either in front of or behind the variator group. The former arrangement allows simple manual focusing by twisting an external focusing ring. Internal focusing elements usually require a motor-driven, switch-activated control. Some zoom lenses, like those on Panasonic's Compact VHS Palmcorders, even do without compensators because their autofocus systems are programmed to do the job.

Recent camcorders, like Panasonic's PV-660, which have electronic image stabilization and electronic zooming, rely on electronics, not optics, for these enhancements. The electronics massage

*David Ranada's writings about aspects of A/V technology have appeared in numerous publications.*





#### Lens Is More:

Subcompact 8mm and VHS-C camcorders by Sony, Hitachi, RCA, Zenith, JVC and Panasonic (left to right) illustrate the progress made in miniaturizing auto-focusing zoom lenses.

the output of the lens' image sensor. In the case of zooming, the central portion of the sensor's signal is electronically enlarged to fill the whole frame. Since the central portion of a lens' image is the easiest part to process without aberrations, the task adds no new burdens to the optical system. It becomes the sensor's job to maintain the image quality at the enlarged ranges.

#### SENSOR SIZE

Solid-state image sensors in camcorders take the place of film in cameras. Light, relatively inexpensive, durable and simply aligned, these remarkable chips contribute much to making camcorders easy to use. In con-

sumer models, they come either as a charge-coupled device (CCD) or as a metal oxide semiconductor (MOS) chip in one of three sizes: 2/3 of an inch, half-inch and 1/3-inch. Half-inch chips are the most widely used. The larger sensors are found in some Hi8 camcorders and professional cameras, and the smaller ones in many of the newest ultra-miniature models, both 8mm and Compact VHS.

The size of a sensor does affect a camcorder's optical design. But, contrary to popular belief, it bears no direct relationship to image quality. A bigger chip doesn't necessarily deliver a better picture. The practice of referring to an image sensor by its size in inches is mere-

ly a convention inherited from the days of imaging tubes, when Vidicons, Saticons, Plumbicons and the like were described by the size of the outer diameter of their tubes. And just as the active, image-sensing areas of the tubes were smaller than their nominal sizes, so the image-sensing areas of chips are a few millimeters smaller than the stated sizes of solid-state sensors.

The real significance of sensor size is its role in miniaturization. As sensors shrink, so can lenses—with no loss in picture quality. And small, light lenses are easier and less costly to produce.

#### FIELDS OF VIEW

Camcorder lenses are often touted



# INSIDE OPTICS

in terms of their zoom ranges; that is, whether they're 6x, 8x, 10x, or, in rare cases, 12x (a factor also expressed in ratio form as 6:1, 8:1, etc.). Unlike sensor size, this is a useful concept, but it's incomplete. To get the whole picture, it's necessary to know a lens' field or angle of view, which describes how much of a given scene a lens can capture.

You can determine a lens' field of view if you know the two extreme focal lengths between which a lens can zoom. These numbers, expressed in millimeters, are usually right on the lens barrel. For a simple lens, like a magnifying glass, the focal length is the distance from the center of the lens to the point where light from an essentially infinite distance converges. If you try to scorch a piece of paper with a magnifying glass, its focal length is simply the distance from the lens to the point of sunlight that triggers the smoke. For a zoom lens, the focal length is the distance from the focal point to the whole assembly's optical center, which changes according to the zoom setting.

Using focal lengths, the sensor size and a dash of trigonometry, it's a simple matter to calculate a lens' angles of view. The accompanying chart (page 40) illustrates how these angles vary across zoom ranges and sensor sizes, as well as how they compare to viewing fields for common 35mm film lenses. (Since the chart data are derived from calculations, not actual lens measurements, specific brands of lenses may vary

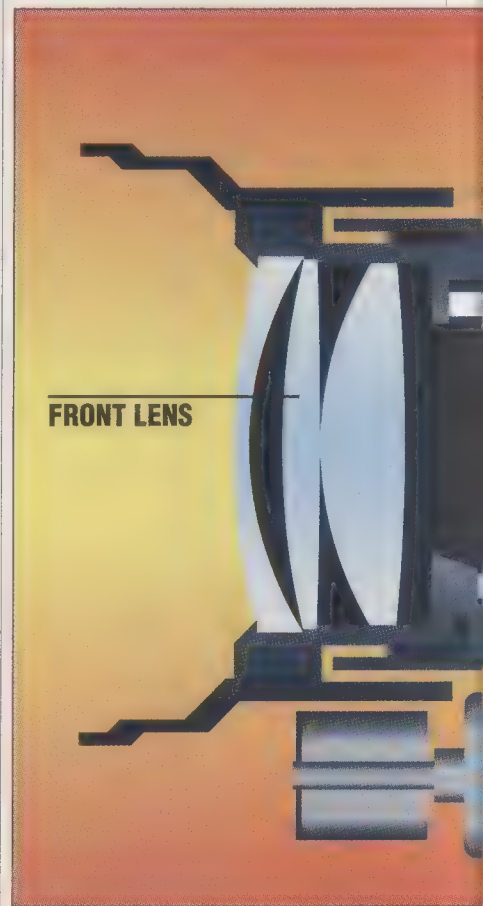
slightly from these viewing fields.)

The chart shows how lenses with identical zoom ratios—6x or 8x, for example—may cover different fields of view. This happens when their focal ranges differ. Looking at the chart, we can see that even though lenses ranging from 9 to 54mm and from 11 to 66mm may both use half-inch sensors, their viewing fields vary by several degrees. Especially noteworthy are the different viewing fields for camcorders that range from 11 to 66mm and from 12 to 72mm, even though they both share 6x zoom power.

At wide-angle, or short focal length, settings, differences of a degree or two are negligible, especially since most TV monitors trim the edges of camcorder images anyway. But at telephoto, or long focal-length, settings, one degree can mean the difference between a distant object filling the screen or floating in the middle of it.

You can see these differences during in-store comparisons in which camcorders are set up on fixed stalks with adjustable tripod heads. Few will want to base a buying decision solely on a camcorder's field of view, but understanding how fields vary helps in deciphering the differences among camcorders. For example, you may want to go with a camcorder that has a wider short focal-length, rather than one with a comparable, but narrower range.

Even at their widest settings, camcorders have narrower angles than



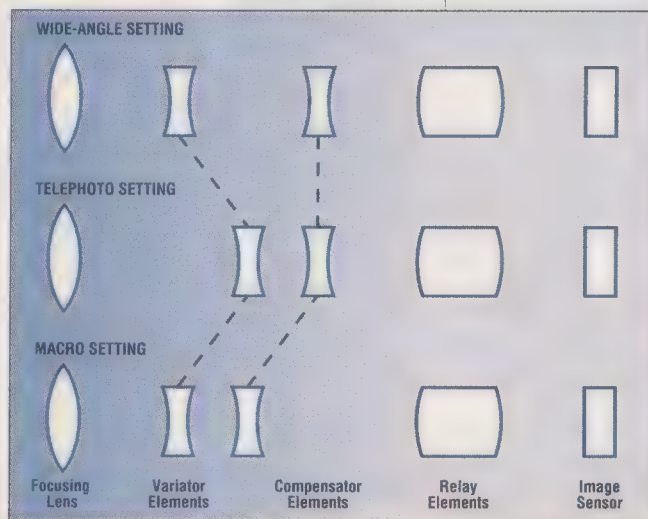
35mm cameras. For example, the 27-degree vertical angle furnished by a standard 50mm SLR lens is considerably wider than the 17-degree vertical view afforded by the standard focal length for video—which is always twice the diagonal dimension of the sensor. This works out to 16mm for a lens using a half-inch sensor (which has an 8mm diagonal).

As a result, video has a zoomed-in quality compared to still photography. But this shift toward narrower angles, made practical by the small size of sensors, has been found to produce less distortion and more pleasing perspectives during pans and other camcorder movements.

## AUTOFOCUS

Few things contribute more to the usability of consumer camcorders than autofocus systems, which are primarily electronic in nature, not optical. Yet while there may seem to be as many autofocus systems as there are camcorders, the systems all fall into three categories: rangefinding, phase detection and blur reduction.

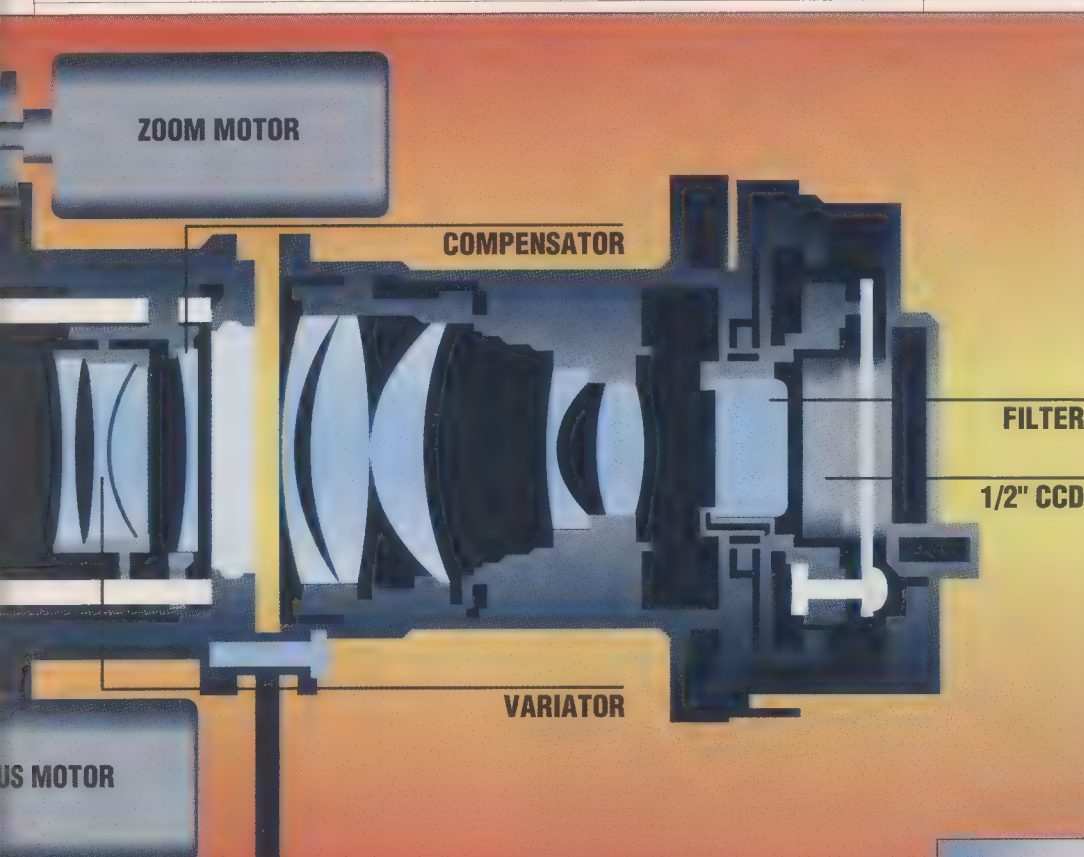
The oldest autofocus system still widely used—mainly because it's reliable and inexpensive—is infrared rangefinding. A camcorder-mounted light-emitting diode, like the one on a TV set's



### 3 Ways to See:

Schematic drawings of a zoom lens illustrate how variator and compensator elements shift in relation to each other for wide-angle, telephoto and macro settings.





**Zoom With a View:** Cross-section of a 6x Matsushita zoom lens shows how its 13 elements relate to each other. The relay section comprises the elements between the compensator and the filter.

remote control, emits a beam of infrared light through a special lens. Another lens, mounted nearby, catches the beam's reflection from the camcorder's subject and directs it to one of many locations on an infrared detector, usually a photodiode array or a special CCD chip.

The subject's distance determines the precise spot on the detector on which the reflected beam lands. This information is then used to adjust the lens' focus. Usually, the detector is mechanically linked to the focusing elements so that the arrangement forms a self-correcting loop, continuously adjusting the focus. You can usually spot an infrared rangefinder by looking for one or two dark red windows on the front of the camcorder. These usually cover the infrared emitter and detector. On some non-infrared models, such windows cover the remote control sensor.

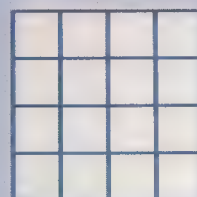
Phase-detection autofocus is an important type of through-the-lens (TTL) system. Dispensing with special infrared lenses, TTL systems determine focus conditions by monitoring the video signal or, in the phase-detection variety, by monitoring the light that passes through the zoom lens. In a standard phase-detection setup, some of this light is diverted onto a detector array where it forms two separate "images" that correspond to the light streaming through the extreme

left and right halves of the zoom lens. A self-correcting loop in the arrangement drives the focusing elements so that the images on the detector match each other as much as possible.

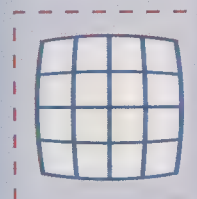
Some camcorders mount the phase-detector behind a single, separate, untinted lens on the front of the unit. This reduces the amount of light diverted from the main lens.

The newest TTL autofocus systems are all variations on the theme of blur reduction, a concept that makes more intuitive sense than the other types of systems, since eyes also detect focus by the lack of blur. Electronically, blur can be detected in any of several ways, such as by measuring the contrast within an image. Piezo and digital autofocus systems exploit the fact that a sharp, focused video signal has a larger proportion of high-frequency video information than a blurry image of the same scene. In principle, it's a relatively simple matter to direct the focusing elements to maximize a zoom lens' high-frequency video output.

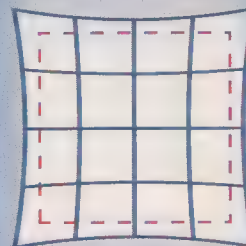
Fuzzy logic autofocus, along with piezo and digital systems, are not means of focus detection, but focus control. They deal with more subtle aspects of focusing, including how and how quickly a system determines when and in which direction to move its focusing elements.



**Normal**



**Barrel Distortion**



**Pincushion Distortion**

**Moving Targets:** During rapid zooms, some camcorder lenses display visible aberrations known as barrel and pincushion distortions.



# How Much Lenses See: A Guide To Zooms And Views

		FIELDS OF VIEW (DEGREES)		
		TOTAL FIELD	VERTICAL	HORIZONTAL
6x	1/3-inch	7—42mm	28.8—4.9	37.8—6.5
	1/2-inch	8.5—51mm	31.5—5.4	41.3—7.2
		9—54mm	29.9—5	39.1—6.8
		11—66mm	24.6—4.2	32.4—5.6
	2/3-inch	12—72mm	30.8—5.2	40.3—7
8x	1/3-inch	7—56mm	28.8—3.7	37.8—4.9
	1/2-inch	8.5—68mm	31.5—4	41.3—5.4
		8.7—70mm	30.8—3.9	40.4—5.2
	2/3-inch	11—88mm	33.4—4.3	43.6—5.7
10x	1/2-inch	8—80mm	33.4—3.4	43.6—4.6
12x	1/2-inch	8—96mm	33.4—2.9	43.6—3.8
	35mm film	28mm	46.4	65.5
		50mm	27	39.6
		135mm	10.2	15.2

In looking for a camcorder, these characteristics need to be evaluated on a model-by-model basis.

Indeed, it's extremely difficult to predict how well autofocus systems work by reading data sheets and brochures. Important variables include a focusing system's speed, accuracy, stability and minimum distance; how much it hunts for a proper focus; its ability to find low-contrast, patterned and off-center subjects; its reaction to windows, reflections, backlighting and movement; even the ease with which it switches over to manual mode.

So many factors come into play that wise shoppers should simply try out models in which they're interested, or their functionally equivalent clones. This means taking the camcorder for a serious test drive. Either shoot a short tape and play it back on a proper monitor, or plug the camcorder's video output into a TV set and put the lens through its paces. It's pointless to evaluate focusing and other lens functions through the viewfinder (though you should check to see how well the viewfinder itself adapts to your eyesight).

## IRIS AND SHUTTER

Still photographers control exposure three ways: by selecting films of different speed (sensitivity), by varying the shutter speed to regulate exposure time, and by twisting the f-stop ring to shrink or enlarge a variable lens aperture called

the iris. Videographers can only control the iris setting, and, to a lesser degree, exposure time (often incorrectly referred to as shutter speed). They have no control over chip sensitivity, the video equivalent of film speed, unless they own Sony's Hi8 CCD-V101 or one of its clones, all of which feature variable gain.

Until recently, camcorder sensors were set for an exposure time of 1/60 of a second, the duration of a single video field. This left the exposure burden squarely on the iris mechanism. Since exposure requirements can change rapidly as subjects move in and out of a frame, the process has long been automated, even on professional video cameras.

A motor, driven by automated circuitry, opens and closes the iris to control the amount of light falling on the sensor. Under intense light, the auto-iris control “stops down” the lens, leaving only a small aperture. Under low-light conditions, the aperture is opened fully, letting all available light hit the sensor. The maximum size of the opening is indicated by an f-stop number, which usually ranges from f/1.2 to f/2 for camcorders. This rating (also known as lens speed) is far less important in video than in still photography because the range of available lens speeds is much more limited, and because chip sensitivity (which is fixed), rather than lens speed, primarily dictates how well a camcorder performs with little light. In-

deed, comparisons of camcorders' sensitivity, or lux, ratings with their lenses' speeds show no correlation between the two factors.

Auto-iris systems face their greatest challenges when the illumination in a scene changes fast and frequently. This can cause unacceptable surges in picture brightness if the changes outpace the iris' ability to keep up. Backlit scenes can also lead to loss of detail in a subject as the iris responds to the overly bright background by stopping down. Backlight-compensation controls, present on many camcorders, widen the apertures a little to restore detail to foreground subjects, although sometimes at the cost of excessive background light. Some of the new auto-irises, like the one on Fisher's FVC-800 8mm camcorder, use fuzzy logic circuits as well as a division of the sensor into multiple zones, for a finer and faster degree of exposure control.

Aperture size as controlled by the iris also affects a lens' depth of field, which is increased by stopping down and decreased by opening up the iris. Depth-of-field control is a primary tool of expression for still photographers and cinematographers, but it is rarely used artistically in video. This is largely because iris control is so crucial for correct exposure and because video exposure time traditionally has been fixed at 1/60.

However, all recent camcorders have adjustable shutter speeds, and a few, like Sony's CCD-V101, have specific



provisions for depth-of-field control, much as in the programmed exposure modes available now in 35mm cameras. Videographers can trade off, within a limited range, the iris opening against the shutter speed.

#### LENS ABERRATIONS

The critical still photographer has much to worry about when it comes to lens selection. There's spherical aberration, chromatic aberration (both transverse and longitudinal), coma, astigmatism and field distortion. For a number of reasons, life for the videographer is much simpler. First, you can't (at least not yet) select the lens separately from the camera. Second, good consumer camcorder lenses are easier to produce than film camera lenses because they are much smaller in diameter. But most important, the performance criteria for even the best lenses for consumer camcorders are much lower than those for 35mm lenses because video as a medium is far less demanding than film.

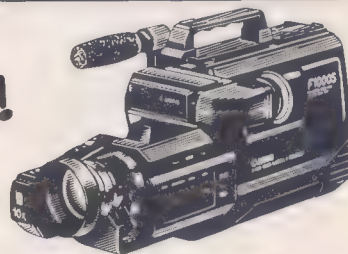
On top of all this, the eye is less sensitive to some of these aberrations when an image is complex and in motion. And nearly all these basic lens defects are swamped by luminance and chrominance resolution limits in the NTSC video system, and quality limits in a camcorder's attached VCR.

The only basic aberration that should cause more than passing concern to a camcorder buyer is distortion. This comes in two flavors, barrel and pin-cushion, both of which are troublesome in zoom lenses. Zooming in to a narrow telephoto view can produce pin-cushion distortion, while zooming out to a wide-angle shot typically generates a barrel effect. Barrel distortion can be especially obvious if the camcorder or the subject is moving, and can visibly increase as a macro function comes into play.

Flare is of more concern to still photographers. But it can show up in camcorders due to internal lens reflections. In camcorders, vertical smearing by the sensor is more important. But this is a factor unaffected by optical design. If it strikes, you may be able to reduce it by manually stopping down, if your camcorder allows it.

With so many details to consider, camcorder optics may seem intimidating, the sort of thing best left to engineers. But it's a subject well worth attention. The new high-resolution camcorders and the pending arrival of interchangeable lenses will place ever-greater demands on camcorder optics. And as home videographers develop better technique and more sophisticated taping tastes, the cameras inside camcorders will have to keep pace with the improved skills of their users. ■

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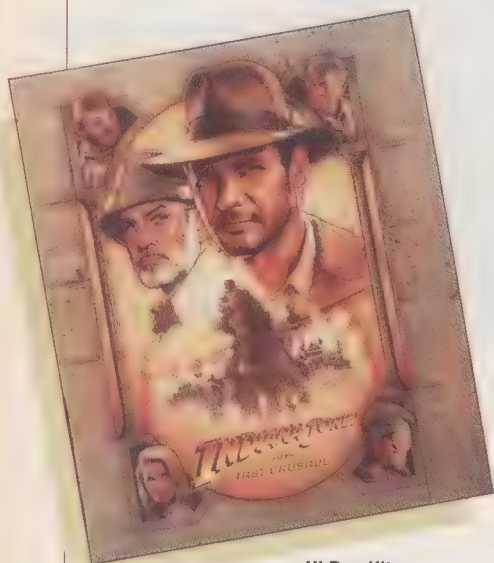
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## Super VHS Update

# SILENT RUNNING

*Super VHS landed with a splash, then seemed to sink. Yet despite slow sales, scientists have quietly improved the format, while fitting it into ever smaller packages.*



**Hi-Res Hit:**  
*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, one of the few blockbusters available in S-VHS.

JVC introduced Super VHS more than three years ago as the video format that would extend the worldwide supremacy of VHS into the '90s. Despite sharp competition by 8mm and the surging popularity of small camcorders and, more recently, laserdiscs, VHS has easily maintained its top dog position. But has S-VHS lived up to its promise? And does the format still hold any surprises?

The answer to the first question depends on where people live and on what they use their VCRs and camcorders for. The answer to the second question is a clear yes. With little or no fanfare, S-VHS has experienced a series of refinements since its January 1987 debut—improvements that enhance the S-VHS picture, improve the system's efficiency, and help it perform in smaller environments, like the chassis of an S-VHS-C camcorder.

Yet S-VHS has never really caught the imagination of American consumers. In Japan, where videophiles embrace new technology with more enthusiasm than elsewhere in the world, S-VHS accounts for more than 40 percent of the market. Virtually all "replacement" VCRs use the S-VHS format. But Americans have been slower to appreciate the improvements offered by the new system. Confronted with higher prices for S-VHS decks and blank tapes, many have stuck with standard VHS,

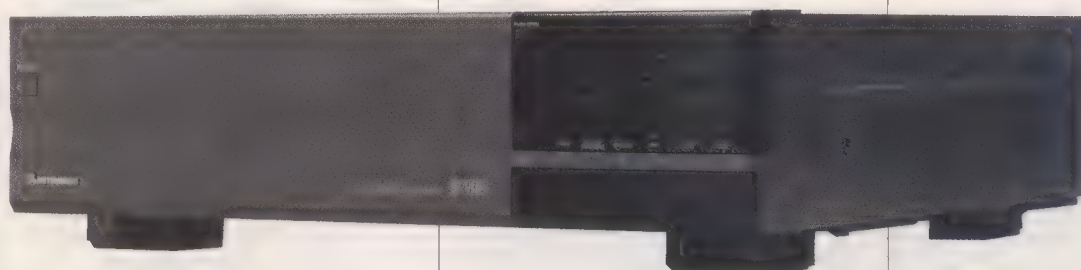
which they consider good enough. Consumer acceptance of S-VHS in the U.S. has not lived up to JVC's expectations—less than ten percent of all new VHS machines sold are in the higher resolution format—and many are camcorders.

While prices on S-VHS machines are finally coming down, tape prices still remain high. S-VHS T-120 cassettes list for around \$15 with ST-C20 reels selling for almost as much, even though they hold one-sixth as much tape. With VHS blanks selling for as little as \$3, price-sensitive buyers are reluctant to switch formats.

Despite sluggish sales, S-VHS continues to mature as a format, with improvements that make today's products superior in most respects to the first VCRs and camcorders. One early criticism of the format was that, while it in-







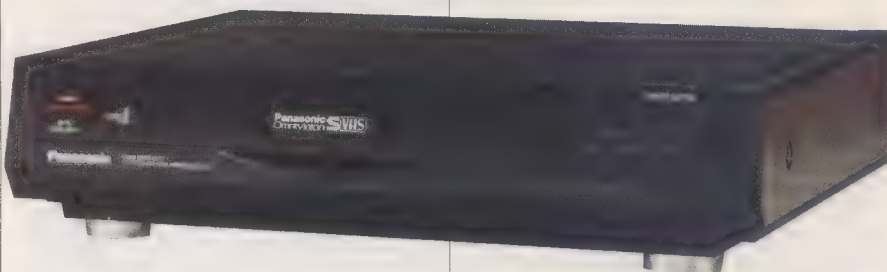
#### Getting Better

##### All the Time:

VCRs like Mitsubishi's U-82 (left), Panasonic's PV-S4080 (below) and Hitachi's VT-S730 (bottom) include updated features that enhance S-VHS performance.

creased picture detail by raising the luminance frequency, not much was done to improve the color signal. Early confusion surrounding the format's separate processing of the color and luminance signals led some to believe that S-VHS was a component video format, as good as broadcast formats such as Betacam or M-II. This is not the case. While S-VHS maintains a separate signal path for luminance and chrominance signals, the color signal is converted to a lower frequency for recording, as with standard VHS, Beta, 8mm and even the 3/4-inch U-Matic format.

Still, by keeping the color and black & white picture components separate for most of their trip through the VCR and, ultimately, to the TV monitor, S-VHS significantly benefits picture quality. Color crosstalk and picture moire are eliminated, as is the dot crawl or hanging dot effect that often shows at the border of two colors.



Even with Y/C (luminance/chrominance) signal processing, however, some color noise remained in the final picture. JVC has overcome this problem in such newer VCRs as the HRS-10000 and the HRS-8800 enhancements. The decks use a new Y/C separator along with a new circuit to reduce color edging and spreading at image borders. A more advanced noise reduction circuit processes low- and high-frequency signals independently. A linear phase aperture correction circuit also contributes to a more natural-looking picture.

These improvements apply to both the SP and EP speeds, but are especially useful in enhancing the appearance of tapes made in EP. Obtaining satisfactory EP picture quality in S-VHS is a high priority with JVC, since this is the speed the company hopes will give S-VHS parity with the rival 8mm format. Currently, the longest VHS-C cassette delivers 30 minutes at SP or 90 minutes at EP. An even longer (and thinner) 40-minute tape capable of holding two hours of EP programming is under development. Quality S-VHS pictures at both SP and EP are important elements of JVC's plans for new products, such as its SC-F007U modular video system, which consists of a tiny VCR,

a detachable LCD screen and a diminutive CCD color camera.

#### OVAL CUTS

S-VHS manufacturers have also concentrated on video head design, not only to enhance S-VHS quality, but to bring new features such as hi-fi sound to VHS and VHS-C camcorders. JVC has developed new oval-cut video heads with rounded corners that eliminate the risk a head will pick up erroneous signals from adjacent tape tracks. Conventional heads, the company claims, have sharp edges that coincide with the azimuth angle of the main head gap, resulting in ghosts and beats in a picture. Although it was developed as an S-VHS improvement, the oval-cut heads have become a standard feature in all of JVC's high-end VCRs and camcorders.

Other manufacturers have also devised improved heads.

Both Hitachi and Panasonic are now



**Not for the Superstitious:** The video drum on Panasonic's PV-S160 camcorder uses 13 heads.





# SILENT RUNNING

using laminated super-amorphous heads, previously available only on professional S-VHS models, on many consumer VCRs. Hitachi's VT-S730 VCR and VM-C1A Thin Man camcorder use these heads. An amorphous head (amorphous film on ferrite) offers higher magnetic flux density and more permeability. The Hitachi design adopts a cross configuration that creates two different head widths in a double azimuth configuration: a wide head for SP record/play, and a narrower head for EP. The cross-head design also eliminates the false gap that can pick up noise-inducing extraneous signals and concentrates the magnetic energy toward the center of the gap.

Amorphous heads have a multi-layer construction that reduces picture noise and enhances color. Hitachi's new head design raises the color signal-to-noise ratio by 3 decibels, and the luminance S/N by at least 5 dB (in SP mode). The improvement at the EP speed is not as great. The new design

**Smallest S-VHS:**  
JVC's SC-007U personal video system comprises a pocket-size stereo S-VHS-C recorder, a tiny LCD monitor and a hand-held video camera.



raises the luminance and chrominance signal-to-noise ratios by at least 3 dB in EP—but that's a significant improvement over earlier designs.

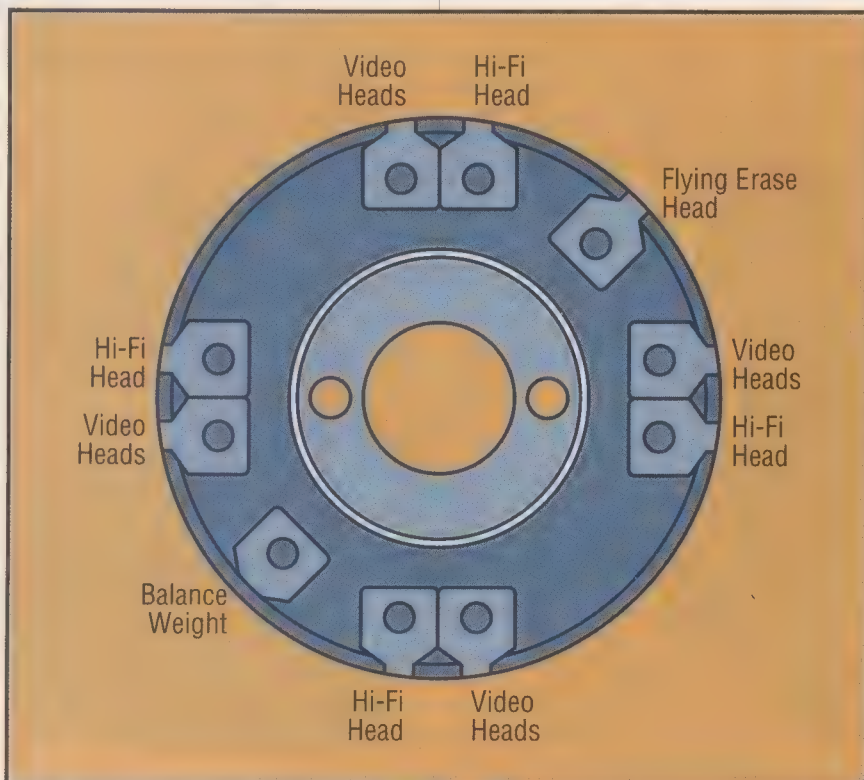
Panasonic's decision to use a smaller 41.33mm diameter video cylinder in all its latest camcorders required an ingenious solution to the problem of adding hi-fi sound to its PV-S160 S-VHS-C camcorder (see illustration). The difficulty lay in cramming 13 heads on the small-diameter drum: four heads for each tape speed, SP and EP, plus four heads for the hi-fi audio signal, plus a frame-width flying-erase head. In addition, a brass weight was needed on the opposite side of the drum to balance the mass of the flying erase head.

The solution is as graceful as it is complicated. The video and the audio heads are clustered together in four groups around the drum. These composite heads include a 24-micron ferrite head for the audio signal, and two amorphous heads (23 microns and 30 microns, respectively) for the EP and SP video signals. This new laminated head is built on a non-magnetic substrate and has the advantage of eliminating contact or "rubbing" noise between the head and the tape, enhancing the signal-to-noise ratio and improving color images.

On many table models, like the HRS-10000, and on some camcorders, like JVC's compact GR-S707, new mechanical tape stabilizers reduce tape jitter. One drawback of the smaller size drum was unwanted tape vibration induced by contact between the extra heads and the tape. A new design with a raised edge on the lower part of the drum has fixed the problem.

Almost all new VHS decks now use full-load transports, which keep the tape threaded around the video drum in all operating modes, including stop, forward and reverse wind. This improves tape handling considerably, and eliminates delays caused by the need to thread the tape. Flying erase heads, jog/shuttle dials, synchro edit jacks (which control two VCRs, or a VCR and a camcorder, for simple editing) and other convenience features have also been introduced. These features are more common on upscale S-VHS decks, but they aren't confined to this format.

The addition of electronic time-base correction circuits has also improved the S-VHS picture. Even with improvements to the tape transport, bearings and impedance rollers, signal stability with most small-gauge video formats remains a concern. None of those "funniest home videos" you saw this year on ABC went straight from the cassette to



**Shrunken Heads:** Bird's-eye view showing how Panasonic fits 13 heads on the PV-S160 camcorder's head drum.



broadcast. All had to be electronically beefed up by passing the signal through a time-base corrector, or TBC. Outboard TBCs have been available for years, but they've always been expensive. New digital techniques now make it possible to build in a basic TBC on many new VCRs, such as Panasonic's PV-S4990, and camcorders. So-called consumer video gear is getting more professional all the time.

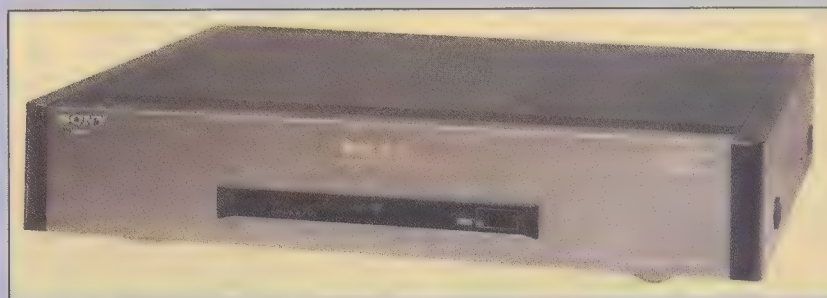
Another recent example is Mitsubishi's U-82 S-VHS table model, which offers dynamic tracking video heads. It's only the second VHS deck to offer such a feature; the first was Panasonic's NV-8950, back in 1983. Dynamic tracking heads are mounted on a piezoelectric wafer that moves up and down in response to the varying linear speed of the videotape and the changing angle of the video tracks. In this way, perfect tracking becomes possible, even with tapes made at the EP speed. The usual horizontal noise bars during some special-effects modes are eliminated.

## MUSCLE DECKS

Despite slow consumer acceptance of S-VHS, the format has received an enthusiastic welcome from professionals who have the technical savvy to appreciate its high-resolution capabilities. Panasonic, JVC, Sharp and Hitachi all maintain industrial video divisions, selling a variety of S-VHS hardware through a separate dealer network.

All four companies offer specialized, costlier S-VHS hardware that outperforms consumer gear, which is built with some compromises in mind. For one thing, industrial machines aren't as attractive to look at, and they're not intended to be. In the tradition of industrial video gear, they're workhorses designed to withstand the rigors of sustained daily use.

Service considerations also come before styling, so many models have easily removed top plates, with plug-in circuit boards that can pop out for service. Some models even have access ports over the head drum, making head cleaning and maintenance easier. Almost all pro VCRs come without tuner sections, since recording off-the-air is a rare requirement. Anyway, it's easy to interconnect an external tuner/timer to fill



## Sony's Super Step Forward



### In Control:

Sony's SLV-R5 is the first S-VHS VCR with a Control S jack, which lets it interface with 8mm and Beta VCRs for precise editing.

In an industry rich in ironies, Sony has added another. It is quietly introducing—with none of the hoopla that usually accompanies important new components—one of the company's most eagerly awaited products, its first Super VHS VCR. Privately previewed to a handful of journalists at the recent Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago, the SLV-R5 combines state-of-the-art features, sleek styling and a relatively low price of \$1,299. Available in September, it represents the final step of Sony's commitment to VHS technology.

The machine's key features include an instant-response full-load tape transport, high-speed rewind, a real-time counter, jog/shuttle knobs on both a fold-down front panel and the remote control, and a flying erase head. Like previous Sony VHS decks, the R5 offers Sony's unique Edit Monitor system, which displays two digitally generated inset pictures on a single monitor, making it possible to view the image from a source tape as well as the image on the tape being edited. For easy camcorder hookup, the R5 has a frontal set of audio/video inputs (including an S-connector), as well as a set of inputs and outputs on the rear panel.

The deck includes Sony's proprietary Control S jack for direct connection to other Sony 8mm and Beta VCRs. Synchro edit control is also provided, and with a pre-roll function that increases editing accuracy. Another editing feature is an electronic tab marking system for rapid, bi-directional access to points on a tape.

A new comb filter and a digital Y/C separator maximize S-VHS quality. To improve image stability, the new transport mechanism has two tape stabilizers. Another innovation is a built-in head cleaner. This is a small roller mounted behind the video cylinder, which briefly touches the spinning video heads each time a tape is loaded or unloaded.

The R5 also offers hi-fi sound, an MTS decoder and a 181-channel, frequency-synthesized tuner. Automatic tracking eliminates the need to manually track SP, LP or EP tapes (the deck plays LP tapes, but won't record them). Other convenience features include an 8-event/1-month programmable timer, a three-hour time backup in the event of power failure, and a programmable remote control with an LCD display, making it possible to add the codes for other brands of remotes into the Sony's control unit.

—RW



the need for broadcast recording.

Industrial decks are optimized for the standard VHS speed, and fitted with industrial grade video heads. These heads produce full-width video tracks, 58 microns wide (the VHS specification), for optimal quality. Consumer machines, on the other hand, include the economy EP speed, where even in S-VHS the results can't equal those of the SP speed. Some so-called industrial S-VHS decks, such as JVC's BS-711 duplicating slave, offer the EP speed for those who insist on it. But as dealers and pros will tell you, for quality results, SP is the only way to go.

S-VHS has found a happy home

## Many TV stations have found S-VHS suitable for professional use.

within Panasonic's industrial video division, which no longer sells the 20-year-old 3/4-inch U-Matic format introduced by Sony and JVC in the early '70s. S-VHS is a better format for the '90s, of-

fering many advantages over 3/4-inch, Panasonic says. The equipment and tapes cost less, and are lighter and more portable. Moreover, an entire two-hour program fits on a single S-VHS cassette, while 3/4-inch still requires two tapes (and two players, where automated playback is required).

S-VHS also offers a sharper, more detailed original image, while 3/4-inch initially delivers pictures with less horizontal resolution. Multigeneration dubbing, however, sometimes gives the nod to the older format, which uses a greater amount of tape area to record its signal. An improved variation of 3/4-inch, called U-Matic SP, is also offered by Sony, but both tape and equipment cost considerably more than S-VHS gear.

The upper threshold of S-VHS horizontal resolution is one that consumers rarely achieve, especially if they only record programs off the air, cable or satellite TV (which generally provides the best signal) for later viewing. Bandwidth constraints limit broadcast TV to only about 330 lines of resolution. S-VHS (as well as Hi8 and ED Beta) easily exceeds this number.

Consumers have rightly asked, "What's the purpose of a video format that's better than I need?" S-VHS backers reply that not all video images originate with commercial TV broadcasts. Generating high resolution video images with a camcorder is a growing aspect of home video, and the better the quality of the original tape you make, the better will be the quality of dubs and edited masters made from them.

Once again, this has been appreciated more by professionals than average consumers. Aspiring videographers, newshounds and wedding photographers readily appreciate the sharper and more detailed images S-VHS can deliver—images that retain far more of their sharpness when dubbed and edited, even if the final distribution tape is delivered to the customer in standard VHS. These video activists are buying S-VHS, but more often the expensive industrial models.

While single-chip S-VHS camcorders (with CCD chips offering from 330,000 to 410,000 pixels) are available, and provide visibly better pictures than their VHS counterparts, costlier professional camcorders from Panasonic and JVC offer two or three CCD chips to maximize image quality and push the format to its limits.

Panasonic's AG-460, for example, is a full-size \$3,680 camcorder that uses two CCD pickups: one for the chrominance signal and one for the luminance signal. Using two chips instead of one

*continued on page 108*

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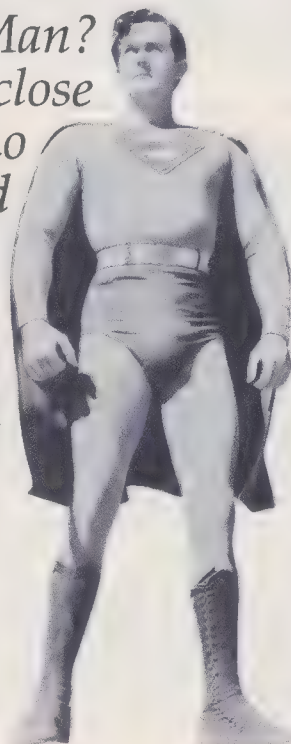
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# SERIAL THRILLERS BLASTS FROM THE PAST

*Will Superman  
smash Atom Man?  
Can Tracy close  
the case? Who  
is Nyoka? Find  
out as classic  
cliffhangers  
stage a video  
revival.*



Most video buffs probably don't think much about movie serials. These action-packed shorts haven't acquired the scholarly cachet of popular Hollywood genres like the musicals and screwball comedies. Despite their entertainment value, serials have been enjoyed by a relatively small audience in recent times. A variety of current releases on cassette and laserdisc, however, are bringing serials home to an audience now ready for titles like *Radar Men from the Moon* and *Drums of Fu Manchu*.

It's been 35 years since the last movie serials were made. Their action, spread out in separate chapters, was designed to bring children back to theaters each Saturday for up to 15 weeks. Theater owners paid a flat fee on a per-chapter basis, which was profitable for exhibitors and producers alike until television came along, bringing free weekly entertainment into the home. But in their heyday of the 1930s and '40s, serials—or chapterplays, as they were known in the trade—were the stuff that kids' dreams were made of: Two-fisted heroes, high-flying air aces, and adventurers of all stripes battling masked villains, jungle perils and interplanetary invaders. Serials used the non-stop action and thrills to affirm the values their audiences grew up on.

The cream of the chapterplay crop on video comes from Republic Pictures, which was to serials what MGM was to musicals. The Republic titles reveal how serials occupied their own cinematic world, and had their own stars. Rod Cameron and Kay Aldridge, for example, were two performers who never got beyond "B" features. But with *G-Men Vs. the Black Dragon* (1942) and *Manhunt in the African Jungle* (1943), Cameron became the Harrison Ford of his generation, while Aldridge achieved immortality as the daring jungle heroine of *Nyoka and the Tigermen* (1942).

Most of the serial producers had something unique to offer. Universal, which made the *Flash Gordon* serials, had sets and music left over from its 1930s *Frankenstein* films, giving their serials an unmatched opulence. In addition to legendary stuntman Yakima Cannut, Republic had two of Hollywood's greatest action directors, William



#### Serial Heroes:

Kirk Alyn as Superman (left), Ralph Byrd as the dapper Dick Tracy (top, second from left), and Robert Lowery as the caped crusader and Johnny Duncan as the boy wonder in *Batman and Robin* (above).



## CHAPTER 1 THE SPIDER STRIKES



**DICK TRACY** 15  
Action EPISODES  
A REPUBLIC SERIAL  
BASED ON CARTOON STRIP BY CHESTER GOULD

Witney and Spencer Gordon Bennet, and two special effects experts, Howard and Theodore Lydecker, who were the envy of every major studio. The Lydeckers could create volcanoes, destroy cities and make the bullet-helmeted Commando Cody fly (in *Radar Men from the Moon*), all on a low budget.

Rhino Video's serial titles are an unusual grab-bag of public domain chapterplays. The most interesting of the lot is *Shadow of the Eagle* (1932), starring John Wayne as a daredevil stunt-flyer hunting for a mysterious renegade pilot called The Eagle. Although short on logic, it has the appeal of a setting in which biplanes and their pilots were graceful objects of wonder. Rhino's *The Phantom Empire* (1936) is also great fun with its blend of western and science fiction action. Singing cowboy Gene Autry discovers that the underground empire of Murania is located beneath his ranch.

Despite the appeal of the Superman character, Warner Home Video's *Superman* (1948) and *Atom Man Vs. Superman* (1949), both starring Kirk Alyn, are disappointments. Mostly they suffer from

the fact that Superman is a difficult character to put into cliffhangers—it's hard to come up with convincing threats to a guy who is supposedly indestructible.

Good Times Video's *Batman and Robin* (1949) has the disadvantage of a threadbare look, not only in the original production but in its low-budget EP-speed release. Robert Lowery is passable as Batman, but Johnny Duncan's surly Robin can't hide the tattoo he has on his arm. Good Times has also chopped off the credits to all but the first and last chapters, which collectors find objectionable.

A number of current chapterplays tie-in nicely with current box office hits. For example, Rhino Video recently released the 1937 serial *Dick Tracy*, starring Ralph Byrd as the square-jawed sleuth, partly to take advantage of Warren Beatty's success at publicizing the character through his blockbuster film.

Republic Pictures has a total of eight serials on laserdisc at presstime, including its dazzling *Adventures of Captain Marvel*. And the company's December



**Whip It Good:** George J. Lewis goes for the gun in an explosive scene from *Zorro's Black Whip*.



**It's a Jungle Out There:** Frances Gifford casts a wary eye on a transaction in *Jungle Girl*.

20 videocassette release schedule includes such vintage chapterplays as *Painted Stallion*, *S.O.S. Coastguard* (starring Bela Lugosi), *Undersea Kingdom*, and the kinkily alluring *Zorro's Black Whip*, starring Linda Stirling as the masked heroine, Black Whip.

A few dealers have successfully cultivated a new audience for serials. New York's Hunter Audio does a major retail and mail order business in western and science fiction serials from the '30s and '40s, and owner Aaron Cooperberg counts the latest wave of Republic titles—including *Flying Disc Man from Mars*, *The Invisible Monster*, and *Radar Patrol Vs. Spy King* (face it, you have got to love these titles)—among his best sellers. And for serious devotees, Captain Bijou (Box 87, Toney, Alabama 35773) offers dozens of serial releases in its 40-page catalogue, including such hard-to-find gems as *Tim Tyler's Luck* (1937, and worthwhile just for its music), *Drums of Fu Manchu* (1938), and *Jungle Girl* (1941), which stars Frances Gifford as one of the most delectable action heroines the screen ever produced. ■



BY GORDON McCOMB

# ANTENNAS

## A GHOSTBUSTER'S GUIDE

*How to tell a yagi from a folded dipole—and cut down the snap, crackle and pop of poor reception.*

**S**ay goodbye to ghosts, snowy pictures and the snap, crackle and pop of faulty reception. Not every last flutter—but certainly the flaws caused by owning the wrong antenna or using it inappropriately. These are problems you don't (for the most part) have to stand anymore and, fortunately, don't have to be mad as hell to solve.

Scan the roofs in almost any town and you'll see TV antennas sprouting like palm trees from California sand—a vista unchanged, but for occasional satellite dishes, since the early days of television. Unlikely as it may seem in this age of cable and tapes, the TV antenna is not an endangered species. Of the 100 million homes with at least one TV set, about 35 million still depend on antennas for basic reception. Even homes with cable supplement their wired links





with outdoor or indoor antennas.

Despite their importance, the skeletal profiles of antennas are as mysterious to most viewers as ancient hieroglyphs. Yet, antennas are relatively simple devices, and knowing just a little about them goes a long way. If you've been thinking about installing an antenna, or

replacing an old one, keep reading. We're going to decipher their code. You'll learn how to choose an antenna based on your needs, including the channels you want to receive, and how to cope with problems of terrain and distance. You'll also learn how to install an outdoor antenna safely and about accessories that can increase an antenna's power.

The word antenna comes from a Medieval Latin term that literally means "sail yard." But in-

stead of catching wind, television antennas are designed to catch the electromagnetic waves broadcast from TV transmission towers. At a tower, the strength of these waves is equivalent to several volts for every square meter of atmosphere. But the strength of the signal voltage — decreases proportionately with distance. At 30 miles from a broadcast tower, the signal may be less than a thousandth of a volt. Yet a simple rooftop antenna will collect that voltage and convert it to a signal your TV set can use.

Outdoor antennas come in many forms, and each has a unique application. Some are designed to intercept VHF broadcasts (channels 2 through 13). Others are tuned for





# ANTENNAS

UHF signals (channels 14 through 69). Still others are all-purpose receivers, snagging VHF, UHF and even FM radio broadcasts.

The basic TV antenna is the simple dipole type. The dipole is composed of two rods separated at their center by an insulator. A pair of wires from your TV set connects to the rods. The length and diameter of the rods depends on the frequency of the TV station you want to intercept. An improvement on the simple dipole is the folded dipole. This antenna uses a single rod bent into a flattened circle.

Most TV antennas use several dipoles (simple, folded or both) arranged in single-file along a metal boom. Only one of the dipoles is electrically connected to the TV set. The others serve as directors and reflectors. The directors help zero in on a signal, and the reflectors collect extra signal to boost reception. This type of antenna is called a yagi, after its inventor, Hidetsugu Yagi, a Japanese physicist.

Two chief benefits of yagi antennas are increased gain and directionality.

*Gordon McComb is the author of Troubleshooting and Repairing VCRs (Tab Books, 1988).*

## Indoor Ears



If you're lucky enough to live within 20 miles of the local broadcast towers, you may only need an indoor table-top antenna to bring pictures into vivid focus and remove rough edges from the sound.

Indoor antennas run the gamut from simple "rabbit ears" that fit on the antenna terminals of TV sets, to sophisticated consoles that rest on the top of TV sets. Don't be fooled by appearances: Some of the better indoor antennas—despite looking like props for a Buck Rogers movie—can substantially improve television reception. They offer fine-tuning and phasing controls, and let you position the elements for best reception.

However, indoor antennas can be adversely affected by their immediate surroundings. They don't work well in metal mobile homes or trailers, and their reception is greatly restricted if your house is lined with aluminum-backed insulation.

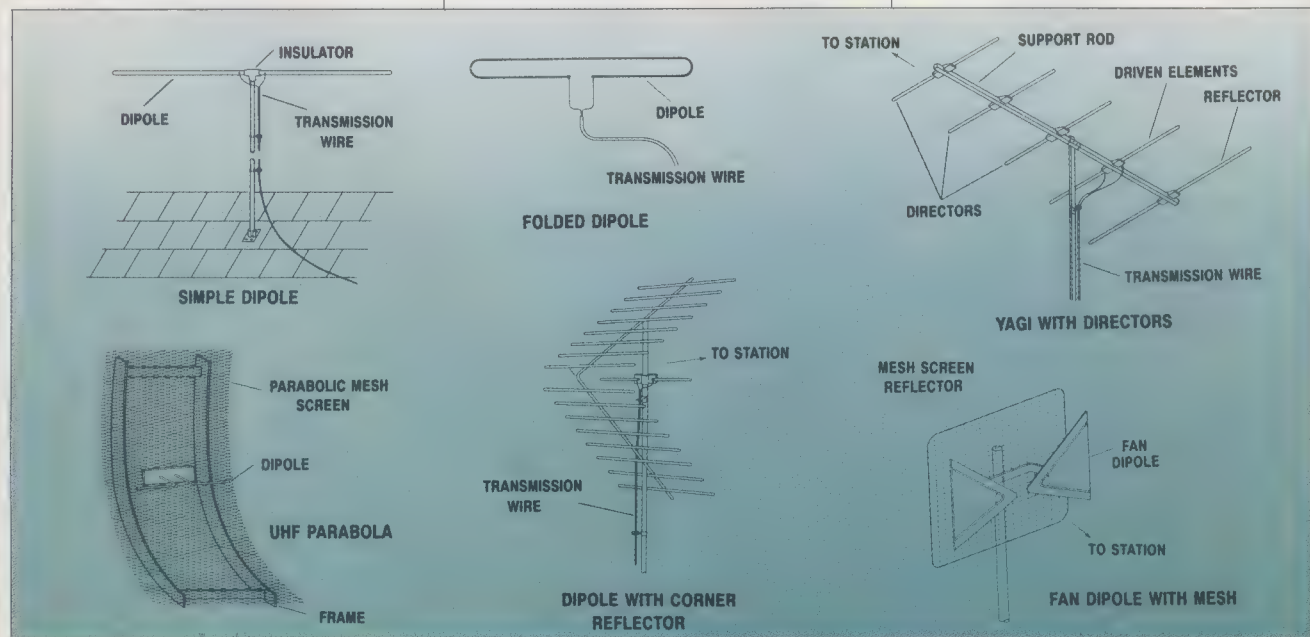
—GM

Gain is like amplification, even though an antenna doesn't have electronic circuitry: The higher the gain, the stronger the picture. Directionality refers to the ability of an antenna to zero in on a distant station, and disregard other stations elsewhere on the horizon.

Lots of gain and directionality are great. But only up to a point. As gain and directionality increase, the spectrum of radio signals, or bandwidth, that an antenna can intercept decreases. In other words, the antenna loses channels.

For example, channel 2 starts at 54 megahertz on the radio frequency dial, while channel 13 ends at 216 MHz. This is a difference of 162 MHz for the spectrum of channels from 2 through 13. It's also an extremely wide range of frequencies for any one antenna to receive, no matter how well designed.

Most off-the-shelf TV antennas are engineered for the best trade-off between gain and bandwidth. You can always buy an antenna with lots of gain, but it may not receive all channels



**Beam It on Down:** Six common types of TV antenna, from basic dipoles and more sensitive yagi models to mesh-screen units designed to bring in UHF stations.



## Antennas can be custom cut to pick up a cluster of channels.

### 2 Ways To Rate Antennas

Unless you're an engineer, it's nearly impossible to determine one of the most important features of an antenna—its effective range—just by looking at one. Overall design—whether an antenna is a simple dipole, a fan dipole, a yagi and the like—says little about the distance at which it will work.

Manufacturers have two ways of classifying antennas, by mileage and with broad-brush terms. While neither is precise, knowing what they mean will help you buy the right model. Mileage ratings are straightforward. For example, a small antenna may be rated at 75 miles for VHF and 50 miles for UHF, while a larger antenna (with two or three times as many elements) may be rated at 150 miles for VHF and 100 miles for UHF.

These ratings are useful if you understand their limitations. Most often, the distances assume ideal weather conditions and line-of-sight reception. They do not account for variances in channel frequency (other than between VHF and UHF bands), the output power of

transmitting stations, or weathering on the antenna itself.

Like mileage ratings for cars, you should expect less-than-ideal performance from your antenna in actual use. A good rule of thumb is to deduct 25 percent from the range rating to compensate for variables. For example, treat an antenna with a manufacturer-specified range of 100 miles as optimal for a reception distance of 75 miles.

Some manufacturers classify their antennas more broadly, using terms like "local," "distant" and "deep-fringe." No one agrees on the exact definition of these terms, but you can use the following as a rough guide:

Antenna Type	Maximum Range	
Local	45 miles	
Distant	65 miles	
Near-fringe	80 miles	
Fringe	110 miles	
Deep-fringe	125 miles	—GM

equally well.

Conversely, if you only want to pull in a single distant, weak station, you can special order (through most TV sales stores) an antenna "cut" just for the station you want. Custom antennas are usually cut to receive specific channels, although some can catch a cluster of channels—like 8, 9 and 10, or UHF channels 20 through 25.

The yagi antenna is the most popular VHF antenna, and a modified form is used for UHF signals. To increase its effectiveness at higher UHF frequencies, corner reflectors are added to scoop up additional signal. The antenna is precisely aimed so that the inside of the yagi's V points to the television broadcast tower. Stations not in-line with the antenna are effectively ignored.

The yagi with corner reflectors is a good all-around antenna for UHF stations, but it's not necessarily the best in all situations. You couldn't tell just by looking at it, but a fan dipole (or "bow-tie") antenna with a mesh reflector picks up signals equally well. Its drawback is that it is not very directional. Sometimes you need to aim the antenna directly at a TV tower to avoid interference from other nearby channels. A simple dipole antenna with a mesh reflector is also suitable for UHF stations. The reflector can be flat, or parabolic for extra directionality.

If you need to tune in all channels, you can save some money by purchasing a combination VHF/UHF antenna (which also receives FM stations). A typical combination antenna uses yagi

dipoles for VHF channels and a corner reflector for UHF channels. Use a band-splitter inside the house to separate VHF, UHF and FM frequencies so they can be applied to the proper TV set and

### How To Aim An Antenna



Aiming an antenna is a simple enough task. The trick lies in knowing which direction to turn it. Here's a hint: Don't point it at the TV station you want to receive.

TV stations are rarely next to their broadcast towers. Most often stations are in or near downtown areas, while the towers are perched on nearby hills or mountains. The higher elevation of the transmitter helps it to beam the signal to more homes, so the station can charge more for its advertising time.

Even if you know the address of a particular TV station, you may not know the location of its broadcast tower. But you can readily find out. Just call the TV station and ask the receptionist. If the receptionist doesn't know, ask to be connected with the public relations department.

Then, using a map of the area find the broadcast tower and your home. You can use a simple protractor and compass as an aid in accurately aiming your antenna at the tower. Sometimes, you can get a sharper picture by aiming the antenna a few degrees to the right or the left. Experiment to find the best spot.

Aiming the antenna is a lot easier if it's mounted on a rotor. Watch the TV set as you turn the rotor knob, and stop when the picture is strongest. Note that the picture clears and fades as the antenna turns: You may even get an acceptable picture with the antenna pointed 180 degrees in the opposite direction. But the reception will be best at one spot only.

—GM



# ANTENNAS

stereo inputs.

As we can see, not all antennas are created equal. You may have no trouble tuning into channel 6, but have a hard time adjusting channel 10 for any picture that's even barely acceptable. The reason is that no two types of antenna cope equally well with the four major transmission factors that affect TV reception: the power of the transmitting station, the frequency of the signal, the distance between you and the tower, and the terrain between you and the tower.

## THE RIGHT ANTENNA

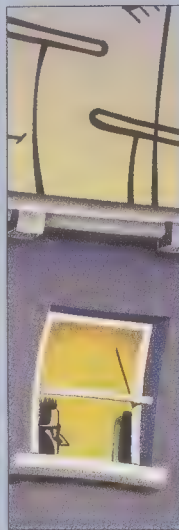
The stronger a station, the further its signal travels before it becomes too weak for any antenna to perceive. Nor do all TV stations broadcast at the same strength. Some are limited to a few thousand watts, while others belch out hundreds of thousands of watts. UHF stations need higher wattages because high frequencies are more easily absorbed by rough terrain and long distances. In addition, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) limits the wattage of stations if they might interfere with channels in nearby cities.

Like sound waves, electromagnetic waves weaken as they travel. You can count on ideal reception if you live five to ten miles from a transmitting tower, and may not even need an outdoor antenna. You can pull in most TV stations within a 50 to 75 mile radius using an average outdoor antenna. Longer distances—75 to 150 miles—require a better antenna, and sometimes an antenna amplifier to boost the signal.

Terrain plays a crucial role, even if transmitting towers are nearby. You'll get the best reception if you live in a line of sight with the broadcast tower. A signal will be considerably weaker if you are nestled in a valley or tucked behind a mountain, where signals can't easily reach. This effect is even worse with UHF channels, particularly above channel 35, since signal range lessens as the frequency rises.

Hills, buildings and lakes can also cause ghosting, creating two or more images on the screen. Ghosts are caused by the combination of signal reflections off nearby obstructions or water with the direct signal received at your antenna.

## A New Breed of Ghost Busters



Television's most frightening villain appears in every episode of every show ever broadcast. It's not an actor—it's the ghost image that lurks behind other characters. It can haunt even the best TV sets, no matter how good the antenna. But broadcast engineers may soon banish unwanted screen ghosts forever.

A ghost is actually a TV transmission signal reflected from a tall building, a hill or a body of water. A TV's antenna picks up both the original signal and one or more reflected signals, and the set displays them simultaneously. The result is a shadowy duplicate image, slightly displaced from the true image.

Short of moving where tall buildings and hills are scarce, there's not much you can do about ghosts—antenna adjustments have little or no effect. But the National Association of Broadcasters is asking for proposals for ghost-cancelling systems, and plans to select one as a standard next year.

Several systems currently exist, including ones designed by AT&T, Zenith, the David Sarnoff Research Center and Japan's Broadcasting Technology Association. All involve a piece of broadcasting equipment and an additional circuit inside TV receivers. TV sets with ghost-cancelling circuits may be available by 1992, says Lynn Claudy, NAB's director of advanced engineering and technology.

Ghost cancellers are already available in Japan, built into separate tuners that cost \$500 to \$1,000. But Claudy says that U.S. consumers will probably get a price break, thanks to the magic of mass production and eventual incorporation of the circuits into TV sets. "Manufacturers will be able to build in ghost-cancelling systems of varying cost and efficacy," he says. "Within a few years, we expect the average ghost canceller to add about \$80 to the price of a TV set."

—Brent Butterworth

If you live within 40 miles of broadcast towers, you can probably get by with a small antenna, one with as few as 15 elements. Larger antennas with more elements are needed if you live further away, or if you are not in a line of sight with the transmitter.

Since extra elements increase both gain and directionality, you need to aim larger antennas more precisely. If you plan to receive many channels, not all of which are coming from the same peak, you'll need to install separate antennas or, better yet, a motorized rotor. The rotor lets you "dial" in the direction of the antenna from your easy chair. Motorized rotors for outdoor antennas are available for about \$60 at Radio Shack stores. But be sure to get a rotor that can handle the weight of your antenna.

If you only want VHF or UHF sta-

tions, but not both, avoid combination antennas. You'll save cash and get better results by erecting a single-band model. For example, let's say you want to tune into a UHF station about 100 miles away. A suitable combination antenna costs about \$70, but a UHF-only antenna rated for 100 miles costs about \$25.

You don't need (or want) a powerful antenna if you live up to about 40 miles from local broadcast towers. There's no sense in paying for a premium 56-element antenna, good for VHF stations up to 200 miles away, if you live down the street from the transmitting tower. However, if you are having trouble receiving two adjacent channels (like 8 and 9) at the same time, a bigger, more directional antenna is more likely to eliminate the unwanted channel from your picture. ▶



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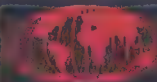
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The pre-amplifier sits near the antenna and boosts a signal immediately after it is received. Low-voltage power for the amplifier flows through the antenna lead. Pre-amplifiers work best if the antenna is some distance from the TV set.

An indoor amplifier boosts the overall strength of a signal. Attach it near the TV set and only use it if an incoming signal is marginal, not snowy. Otherwise, you're merely amplifying the snow, not

the picture.

You can also improve reception by using high quality lead-in wire, impedance matching transformers, signal splitters, band splitters, and the other paraphernalia associated with outdoor antenna installations. Don't expect quality pictures with a \$100 antenna if you use cheap or old wire. The best all-around lead-in wire for TV reception is RG-6 coaxial cable, although if you're wiring a UHF-only antenna, you may want to use foam-insulated, twin-lead instead.

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To properly receive television signals an outdoor antenna must be mounted on a mast. The mast can be planted in the ground, attached to the side of a house, clamped onto a chimney, or suspended above the roof on a telescoping pole. The higher the antenna, the better the reception. Whenever possible, make sure the antenna is above the level of nearby roofs.

If your house is on top of a hill and you don't need to worry about elevation, you can mount your antenna on a short four- or five-foot mast and attach the mast directly to the house. There are a

number of clamps that can secure the mast, including eave mounts, chimney mounts and vent pipe mounts. Avoid attaching an antenna to a plastic vent pipe. They break easily. Chimney mounts should not be used if the fireplace sees regular use. In time, soot from the chimney will coat the antenna and dull its sensitivity.

You can raise an antenna a few feet off a roof by using a tripod mount. These attach at the peak of the roof and work with antenna masts up to five feet tall. The antenna mounts at the top of the mast.

You should support a mast with guy wires if it's above eight feet. Place three or four around the mast and secure the wires, using turnbuckles to provide tension, to the roof or eave of the house. The wires prevent the mast from toppling over in heavy winds. Add additional sets of guy wire for every eight to ten feet of mast height. For example, a 30-foot mast should be rigged with at least three sets of guy wire, one set each at the 10-, the 20- and the 30-foot mark.

All outdoor antennas should be grounded to protect against lightning. This requires connecting the mast to a

*continued on page 115*

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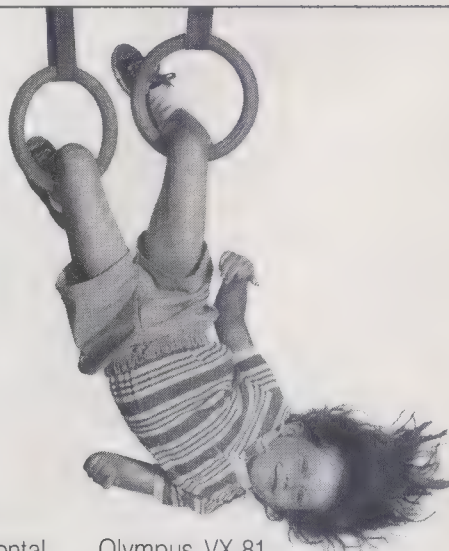
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# PROGRAMMING

## Film of the Month

### *The Hunt for Red October*

1990. Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn; dir. John McTiernan. 135m. (PG) Hi ss cc no list price. B \$29.95. Paramount. V image: good.

The Berlin Wall is history. Our nuclear stockpiles are being diminished. Mikhail Gorbachev is more popular in the United States than President Bush. From any practical perspective, the Cold War appears to be over. You wouldn't know it, though, from watching *The Hunt for Red October*, a turgid technothriller that looks hopelessly outdated in this era of glasnost and Gorby-mania.

The Red October is a giant Russian nuclear submarine propelled by some doohickey that makes it undetectable by sonar. When the sub disappears, and emerges in the Atlantic, the Joint Chiefs of Staff assume that the Russians are mounting a first strike on Washington, D.C. CIA analyst Jack Ryan (Alec Baldwin) has another theory, however: that the sub's skipper (Sean Connery) is trying to defect to the West. The chase is on, with the American and Russian fleets competing to get to the renegade sub first.

From its setup, *The Hunt for Red October* seems to have all the right elements for a good old-fashioned game of cat-and-mouse. Its enormous, virtually all-male cast (including many of Hollywood's best character actors) has tons of cool-looking equipment to bump their heads against. Its director, John McTiernan, boasts an impressive action-oriented resume; his last film, *Die Hard*, was one of the most entertaining high-tech thrillers ever. Unfortunately, *The Hunt for Red October* never generates any real suspense.

The scenario—trying to locate an essentially invisible target—leaves the actors spending most of their time studying sonar screens or reading computer printouts. Until some last-reel contrivances finally thicken the plot, there are



**Depth Charge:** Captain Marko Ramius (Sean Connery) looks to the West in *The Hunt for Red October*.

no real confrontations between the Americans and Russians, which drains the movie of any sense of immediacy. The video transfer is a problem, too. *The Hunt for Red October* is meant to be seen in a theater, where the subs' massive bodies can dazzle you. Watching it on TV dilutes the impact considerably.

The leads, meanwhile, seem overwhelmed by all the expensive hardware. Connery delivers a laid-back performance that could be meant to convey the captain's world-weariness, but instead makes you wonder how he could possibly have the nerve to pull off this stunt. Baldwin, who is so good at playing sleazeballs (*Married to the Mob*), seems uninspired in the hero's role.

When watching this disappointingly slow movie, it feels like McTiernan and company must have become so dispirited by current events in Germany and Eastern Europe, they just couldn't find the juice to pump up this movie. While great pains are taken to remind

the audience that the action is taking place pre-Gorbachev, *Red October* doesn't even work as Cold War nostalgia. There isn't a single ounce of humor in this movie; you're expected to regard this threat with the utmost seriousness. But the theory that a thriller is only as good as its villains holds true: The Russian bad guys are so blustering and ineffectual that the whole exercise seems academic.

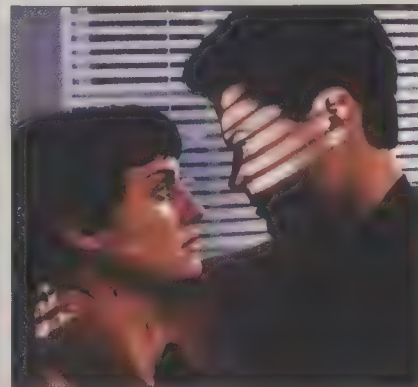
Which begs the question: Now that the mean old Russkie bear has been declawed, where can Hollywood look for villains? Director Jack Sholder took an interesting approach in his made-for-cable thriller *By Dawn's Early Light* by having a hawkish American president nearly launch Armageddon. Other filmmakers have found villains in drug dealers, South American dictators and space aliens. But the best villains remain those of McTiernan's original *Die Hard*, motivated by the purest cause of all: money.

—Lou Kesten



BY SOL LOUIS SIEGEL

# Drama



**Face the Music:**  
*Glory's* 54th Regiment  
prepares for battle  
(left), while Lisa Zane  
and Rob Lowe square  
off in *Bad Influence*.

**T**he glory of *Glory* lies not in its vaunted physical accuracy, and certainly not in historical accuracy, since its makers are no more inclined than anyone else to let the facts get in the way of a good story. What makes it different from other historical epics is that its factual alterations are made not for theatrical effect, but with the intent of increasing our understanding of black soldiers during the Civil War. Even when it doesn't work, it maintains its integrity.

The 54th Massachusetts Infantry was a black regiment formed in 1863 and commanded by the 25-year-old Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, a Boston Brahmin. On July 18 of that year, the 54th led a heroic, though futile, assault on Fort

Wagner, an imposing earthwork guarding the approach to Charleston, South Carolina. Widely reported in the North, this exploit lent impetus to the full-scale recruitment of blacks into the Union forces.

The real struggles of the 54th—for decent clothing and equipment, equal pay, respect and, finally, the right to fight—are portrayed in a series of fictional incidents involving mostly fictional characters. This makes the picture more symbolic than real, but the attitudes of the men, black and white, play convincingly. It also gives an ensemble of fine players the opportunity to bring new life to old boot-camp routines.

Director Edward Zwick does not flinch from the horrors of America's

bloodiest war, nor from the cruel irony that black men, in order to prove their manhood, had to throw themselves headlong into slaughter. The last irony, neatly foreshadowed, is that despite their common cause, the black soldiers and their white officers can find true fraternity only in the grave. *Glory* thus serves as an allegory of American race relations, past and present.

Not all the flaws are minor. As Shaw, Matthew Broderick is out of his depth. Much of the material concerning Trip, the bitter escaped slave (Denzel Washington's Oscar-winning role), is pat and baldly manipulative. There are even a couple of glaring continuity errors. But, despite the mistakes, *Glory* clears away big lies about blacks and the Civil War. Trip puts it simply enough: "We're men, ain't we?"

*Bad Influence*, a Faustian thriller, is an ultra-modern morality tale. Michael (James Spader) is a yuppie banker who's been letting people walk all over him. Enter Alex (Rob Lowe), a charming drifter who takes over Michael's life, introducing him to L.A.'s wild night life, teaching him to lie and cheat to get what he wants, and making him a tiger at the office and an animal in bed. When things go too far, Michael finds getting rid of him a tad more difficult than he expected. "You can't kill me," sneers Alex at crunch time, "because I

## REVIEWED

### GLORY

1989. Matthew Broderick, Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman; dir. Edward Zwick. 122m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. LV also. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

### BAD INFLUENCE

1990. Rob Lowe, James Spader, Lisa Zane; dir. Curtis Hanson. 99m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

### BLUE STEEL

1990. Jamie Lee Curtis, Ron Silver, Clancy Brown; co-wr./dir. Kathryn Big-

elow. 103m. (R) Hi cc \$89.98. MGM/UA. V image: good.

### THE HANDMAID'S TALE

1990. Natasha Richardson, Robert Duvall, Faye Dunaway; dir. Volker Schlöndorff. 108m. (R) Hi cc \$89.99. HBO. V image: excel.

### TIME OF THE GYPSIES

1989. Davor Dujmovic, Ljubica Adovic; co-wr./dir. Emir Kusturica. 136m. (R) Hi sub. \$89.95. LV \$39.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.



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never showed you how."

Shuttling between settings that are corrupt or coldly modern, Curtis Hanson keeps everything, including his carefully contrasted stars, smooth, low-key and slippery as polished glass. The script by David Koepp is snappy and savvy, and the sexual (and homosexual) undercurrents are kept below the surface. This is one thriller that doesn't require screaming or sudden jolts to keep us riveted.

*Blue Steel* is all jolts, lurid and outlandish, and proud of it. Megan (Jamie Lee Curtis) is a rookie cop forced to blow away an armed creep on her first patrol. When a bystander makes off with his gun, the internal-affairs boys are only too happy to suspend her for excessive force. Then comes the bad news: The bystander, Eugene (Ron Silver), uses the gun to commit a series of random murders even as he's trying to win over Megan.

Director Kathryn Bigelow's urban nightmare is heavy on style and virtually plotless, especially after Eugene reveals himself. The film is a series of episodes in which Megan has to fight various forms of male domination, concluding with a gun battle in broad daylight on Wall

Street. *Blue Steel* makes its points with the subtlety of a .44, but it does make them.

*The Handmaid's Tale* has no more to say about sexual politics than *Blue Steel* does. Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel, about a near future in which the U.S. has been replaced by the fundamentalist Republic of Gilead, took modern man's fear of modern woman to its logical conclusion. Fertile women are stripped of family, possessions and identity, dressed in red and assigned as "handmaids" to elite Commanders, with whom they are ordered to make babies, or else.

Director Volker Schlöndorff (*The Tin Drum*) is good at evoking repressed sexuality, but the script (by Harold Pinter!) is flat and underimagined; the thing plays more like a French Resistance movie than a cautionary tale. The actors do their best, but the only ones who fly are Natasha Richardson as the indomitable heroine and Robert Duvall, who, as her Commander, makes the most of a religious hypocrite's contradictions.

A world of true fantasy is created in the Yugoslavian *Time of the Gypsies*, a folklorish, tragicomic fable in which Perhan, a young gypsy, goes to Italy to make

his (illegal) fortune and loses everything. Emir Kusturica, who is emerging as one of the most distinctive filmmakers in Europe, sets a whimsical, melancholy tone in which anything can happen, not always for the better. Despite its running time, it doesn't seem a moment too long — and it's definitely different. ■

## TECH TIP

### Crafty connections

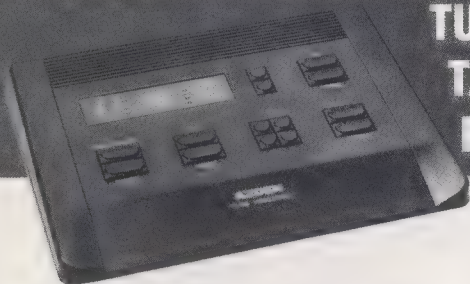
Connecting audio and video cables to the back of a VCR can be frustrating when there's little light or space. To make this chore easier, use 90-degree mono RCA jack adapters (Radio Shack stock number 274-306). Insert the male end of an adapter into each RCA jack on the back of the VCR and leave them there, pointing up. This lets you plug cables in vertically, instead of horizontally. The jacks will be easier to see and use.

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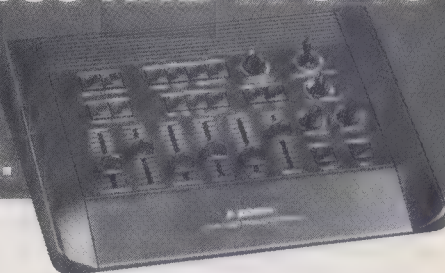
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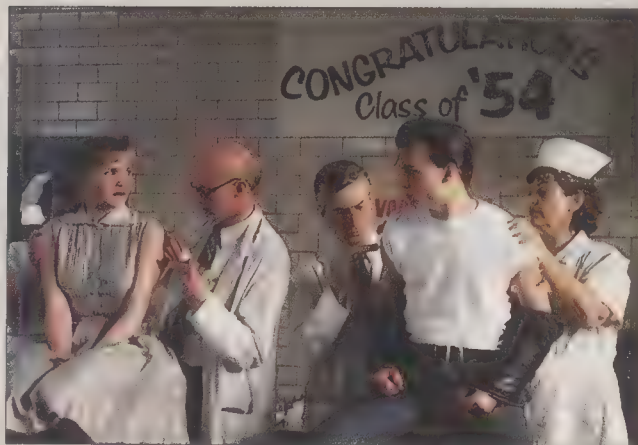
BY JON YOUNG

# Comedy

**A**fter a summer of big-budget, big-hype movies, the weary viewer welcomes smaller-scale flicks that get their heat from ideas and actors, not special effects and marketing teams. Exhibit A: the Hudlin Brothers' *House Party*, a delightful antidote to overkill, and proof you don't need a fat wallet to make a rich, vibrant film.

Though saturated with *au courant* rap music and black culture, *House Party* depicts a situation familiar to anyone who's ever been young and frisky. Kid (Christopher Reid) wants to go to a function at pal Play's (Christopher Martin) home, only he's been grounded by dad (Robin Harris) following a fracas with school bullies (R'n'B stars Full Force). He escapes, of course, sparking a very busy evening in which Kid eludes the tough guys, finds true love, and lands in jail before getting bailed out by friends. Not bad for a weeknight!

Standard plot devices, to be sure, but unusually appealing characters add the spark. With his breezy demeanor and exaggerated flat-top 'do—a "fade" to the hip—Kid is cartoon charm personified. Whether getting hassled by the



**Common Ground:** "Square" Allison (Amy Locane) and "drape" Cry-Baby (Johnny Depp) overcome their differences in John Waters' campy musical.

cops (who call him "Eraserhead") or putting the moves on a cutie, he never loses his good-natured poise. Real-life rap partner Play makes a solid, more conventional foil and Tisha Campbell sparkles as the girlfriend who refuses to be a passive conquest. As the disgruntled dad, the late Robin Harris is an amusing show unto himself, muttering gruff asides like a streetwise Popeye.

*House Party* even offers a dash of social commentary and advocates responsible behavior, mocking excess drinking and promoting safe sex via a hilarious condom gag. And in the wake of the hysteria surrounding 2 Live Crew, Kid 'n Play's witty rapping may open eyes and ears to the genre's virtues.

On a different note, John Waters' tuneful *Cry-Baby* offers nonstop camp delights. A '50s tale pitting greaser "drapes," led by "Cry-Baby" Walker (Johnny Depp), against mainstream "squares," this frantic farce makes up for a lack of plot with plenty of attitude. "Bein' bad sure feels good" is the credo, one pretty Allison Vernon-Williams (Amy Locane) adopts in rejecting the proper world of her grandmother (Polly Bergen) for outcast Cry-Baby. The ensuing uproar draws on everything from James Dean and *Jailhouse Rock* to frilly dresses and Pat Boone before uniting the unlikely couple in a ridiculous happy ending.

Johnny Depp has the dumb angst and sneering upper lip required for a tormented hero, while Amy Locane's sweet, sexy smile hints at the "bad girl" behind the nice facade. Whether or not you buy the archetypal leads, however,

the supporting cast is a hoot, with Susan Tyrell and rock great Iggy Pop as earthy hillbillies, Joe Dallesandro and Joey Heatherton playing Bible-thumping fanatics, and David Nelson and Patty Hearst as suburban clichés. And let's not forget *Hairspray*'s Ricki Lake and former porn star Traci Lords as gang members, and absurd cameos from Troy Donahue and Willem Dafoe. If this seems a bit too "in," it's still fun.

Above all, *Cry-Baby* reflects Waters' deep affection for the rockabilly and



**Wax Attack:** DeeJay Billal (Martin Lawrence) can't get the girl in *House Party*.

## REVIEWED

### HOUSE PARTY

1990. Kid 'n Play, Full Force, Robin Harris; wr./dir. Reginald Hudlin. 100m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

### CRY-BABY

1990. Johnny Depp, Ricki Lake, Traci Lords; wr./dir. John Waters. 86m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc no list price. LV \$34.98. MCA/Universal. V image: good.

### JOE VERSUS THE VOLCANO

1990. Tom Hanks, Meg Ryan, Abe Vigoda; wr./dir. John Patrick Shanley. 102m. (PG) Hi ss cc \$92.95. LV \$24.98. Warner. V image: good.

### CRAZY PEOPLE

1990. Dudley Moore, Daryl Hannah; dir. Tony Bill. 91m. (R) Hi cc no list price. LV \$34.95 B \$29.95. Paramount. V image: good.

### NUNS ON THE RUN

1990. Eric Idle, Robbie Coltrane; wr./dir. Jonathan Lynn. 94m. Hi cc \$89.98. CBS/Fox. V image: good.



R'n'B music of the '50s, much the way *Hairspray* saluted the '60s. In addition to vintage gems from the likes of Earl Bostic and the Jive Bombers, the film features first-rate songs in period styles, recorded by such worthies as Dave Alvin and Rachel Sweet. For all the messages about tolerance and mild stabs at outrageous humor, this is essentially an old-fashioned musical, sloppily executed but winning nonetheless.

John Patrick Shanley continues to bask in the glow of *Moonstruck*, making his directorial debut as well as scripting *Joe Versus the Volcano*. However, this ambitious failure won't enhance the Oscar winner's reputation one iota. The listless fable traces the odyssey of loser Joe Banks, who abandons a dreary office job after being told he has just a few months to live. Hired by a millionaire (Lloyd Bridges) to undertake a bizarre South Seas suicide mission, Joe figures he has nothing to lose. During the relentlessly whimsical journey, he encounters the girl of his dreams (Meg Ryan) and learns to savor the joys of life all over again.

Meant as an airy allegory, it just doesn't have enough "stuff": Scenes of

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Mark Balaj

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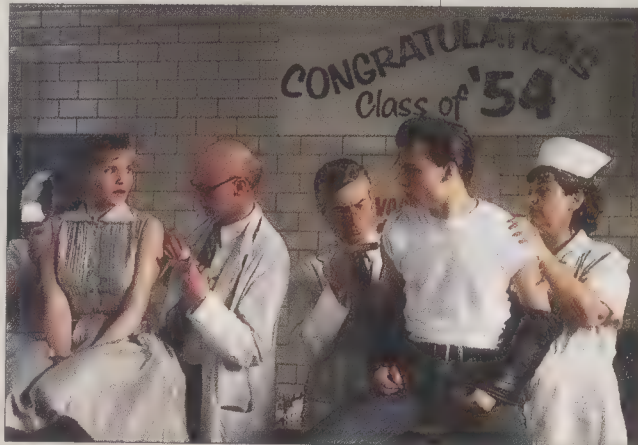


BY JON YOUNG

# Comedy

**A**fter a summer of big-budget, big-hype movies, the weary viewer welcomes smaller-scale flicks that get their heat from ideas and actors, not special effects and marketing teams. Exhibit A: the Hudlin Brothers' *House Party*, a delightful antidote to overkill, and proof you don't need a fat wallet to make a rich, vibrant film.

Though saturated with *au courant* rap music and black culture, *House Party* depicts a situation familiar to anyone who's ever been young and frisky. Kid (Christopher Reid) wants to go to a function at pal Play's (Christopher Martin) home, only he's been grounded by dad (Robin Harris) following a fracas with school bullies (R'n'B stars Full Force). He escapes, of course, sparking a very busy evening in which Kid eludes



**Common Ground:** "Square" Allison (Amy Locane) and "drape" Cry-Baby (Johnny Depp) overcome their differences in John Waters' campy musical.

cops (who call him "Eraserhead") or putting the moves on a cutie, he never

the supporting cast is a hoot, with Susan Tyrell and rock great Iggy Pop as earthy

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R'n'B music of the '50s, much the way *Hairspray* saluted the '60s. In addition to vintage gems from the likes of Earl Bostic and the Jive Bombers, the film features first-rate songs in period styles, recorded by such worthies as Dave Alvin and Rachel Sweet. For all the messages about tolerance and mild stabs at outrageous humor, this is essentially an old-fashioned musical, sloppily executed but winning nonetheless.

John Patrick Shanley continues to bask in the glow of *Moonstruck*, making his directorial debut as well as scripting *Joe Versus the Volcano*. However, this ambitious failure won't enhance the Oscar winner's reputation one iota. The listless fable traces the odyssey of loser Joe Banks, who abandons a dreary office job after being told he has just a few months to live. Hired by a millionaire (Lloyd Bridges) to undertake a bizarre South Seas suicide mission, Joe figures he has nothing to lose. During the relentlessly whimsical journey, he encounters the girl of his dreams (Meg Ryan) and learns to savor the joys of life all over again.

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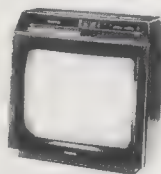
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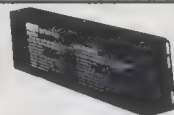
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BY KENNETH KORMAN

## Laserdiscs

**T**he '80s were more than a little unkind to Gaston Leroux's 1910 novel, *The Phantom of the Opera*. Lavish-but-empty stage productions and cheaply made feature films blunted the story's time-honored appeal. But a newly restored version of the classic 1925 movie, carefully produced by independent disc-only label Lumivision, brings the *Phantom* back from the dead.

Digitally transferred from an original 35mm acetate print locked away since 1950, and with seldom-seen technicolor material (in the original two-color process) supplied by the UCLA Film Archives, the silent *Phantom* is presented in all its original glory. Its five-story replication of the Paris Opera House's interior—still standing at Universal Studios Hollywood—is an impressive sight even today, and Lon Chaney's performance as the tragic "Opera Ghost" is as affecting as ever.

In addition to preserving the film, the disc is intended to re-create the experience of a theatrical presentation. Included is a lively new organ score, written last year by Korla Pandit and recorded in front of a live audience viewing the film, along with the audience's spontaneous laughter and applause. Lumivision's decision to press side two in the CAV format is another welcome bonus—all films running less than one hour and 30 minutes should be presented this way, as a costly extra disc is



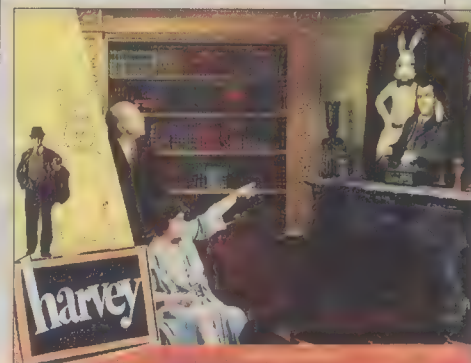
**Frightful Sights:**  
The Phantom attends the masked ball in a rare color scene from *The Phantom of the Opera* (left), while Josephine Hull is startled by the portrait on her mantle in a lobby card from *Harvey*.

not required. Beautifully packaged in a gatefold sleeve with in-depth liner notes, and reasonably priced at \$39.95, this *Phantom* is one of the year's outstanding laserdisc releases.

Preston Sturges' *Sullivan's Travels* (1941), a part of MCA/Universal's ongoing Encore Edition series of classic films on disc, is an eye-opening experience for anyone unfamiliar with the dazzling writer/director's work. Uproariously funny, and with a social conscience all its own, *Sullivan's Travels* seems far too sophisticated to be nearing its 50th anniversary. Its witty, rapid-fire dialogue—especially in the all-important opening scenes, and later in the banter between co-stars Joel McCrea and Veronica Lake—puts the vast majority of current films to shame.

Fictional Hollywood director John L. Sullivan (McCrea) decides that he can't create "a true canvas of the human condition" unless he experiences the hard life first hand, so he hits the road with nothing but the clothes on his back and ten cents in his pocket. Along the way he meets a struggling actress (Lake), and together, the two learn a few things about poverty, friendship and the role of the popular artist. But the movie is never as heavy-handed as it sounds. Just as much fun the second time around, *Sullivan's Travels* is worth owning in any form. On laserdisc, it's a must.

Written by Mary Chase from her Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway play, *Harvey* (1950) is another classic film



with a passionate and loyal following. This whimsical tale involves one Elwood P. Dowd (Jimmy Stewart), a small-town man with a taste for alcohol and a six-foot-tall rabbit as his companion. Problem is, most—but not all—of Dowd's family and friends can't see his imaginary pal.

Stewart seems especially comfortable in the role, and in a recently recorded spoken introduction to the film (included here and on the cassette version), he describes it as one of his personal favorites. *Harvey's* "stop and smell the roses" message, however, is probably not for everyone. Like all sentimental movies, it either reaches you or it doesn't. This Encore Edition disc also includes the original theatrical trailer and several chapter stops, as does *Sullivan's Travels*.

Voyager's three-disc CAV 50th anniversary edition of Alfred Hitchcock's *Re-*

*continued on page 92*

### REVIEWED

#### THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

1925. B&W. Lon Chaney, Mary Philbin; dir. Rupert Julian. 85m. dig. 2 sides. CLV/CAV \$39.95. Lumivision.

#### SULLIVAN'S TRAVELS

1941. B&W. Joel McCrea, Veronica Lake; wr./dir. Preston Sturges. 91m. 2 sides. CLV \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

#### HARVEY

1950. B&W. James Stewart, Josephine Hull; dir. Henry Koster. 104m. dig. 2 sides. CLV \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

#### REBECCA

1940. B&W. Laurence Olivier, Joan Fontaine, George Sanders; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. 130m. plus supplement. dig. 6 sides CAV \$124.95. 3 sides CLV \$69.95. Voyager/Criterion.





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# Television

**A**sk any demi-god: Immortality is a blessing and a curse. And with television—a cross between god and man if ever there were one—the immortality afforded by home video has become a catch-all for what was designed to be catch-as-catch-can. As the current batch of TV-show releases demonstrates, the series that hold up best are those that were designed for the ages, not the ether.

Prime among these are the first four volumes of *The Twilight Zone* (CBS, 1959-64), previously available only through mail order. The uncut episodes (two on each cassette) of Rod Serling's anthology series—fantastic in both senses of the word—play as well three decades later as they did during their original run, thanks not only to the talents of Serling and his team but to CBS/Fox's loving restoration.

The black & white image quality is breathtaking, capturing cinematic gray scales from deep, pure black to blinding white, giving the show's crisp cinematography and sculptural lighting effects full, fluid rein. The pristine look aptly showcases the work of such directors as Richard Donner (*Lethal Weapon*), Buzz Kulik (*Brian's Song*) and Lamont Johnson (*My Sweet Charlie*), all of whom helped forge TZ's distinctive oblique angles, unexpected camera swings and dramatic but not melodramatic zooms.

Happily, too, the choice of episodes here bears the mark of a connoisseur. Among the picks: *Steel*, about a robot boxer and his too-human owner (Lee Marvin); *Time Enough at Last*, starring Burgess Meredith as a nearsighted survivor of an atomic blast; and *The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street*, a Rod



**Model Citizens:** Blake Edwards' *Peter Gunn* (left) is the "coolest private eye ever," while *Space Patrol* (above) features a hero of a different sort: Commander Buzz Corry of the United Planets.

Serling original and the series' virtual signature show, about fear, mob rule and, very incidentally, two aliens. TZ's compassionate humanism, and the artistry with which it unfolded, has found a sterling home far away from the butchery of syndicated reruns.

Holding up almost as well is *Secret Agent* (CBS, 1965-66), Patrick McGoochan's follow-up to his British spy series *Danger Man* (and, to some, the prequel to his classic *The Prisoner*). Today remembered less for its one-season run than for its jaunty-twangy Johnny Rivers theme song, *Secret Agent* eschewed high-tech derring-do and blithe gunplay for literate scripts about a wea-

ry, moral, well-regarded but sometimes ambivalent spy. In contrast to the comic-book chest-beating of some of today's TV "heroes," agent John Drake acknowledged that his often-sordid work was "a virus...I'm part of the disease."

Episode seven (of the eight released so far) finds Drake on a not-too-convincing Jamaica set, trying to weed out a double agent. The image quality is a bit washed out, as are most TV dramas of the time, but the dialogue and the acting are at once stylish and natural. Notably, the episode was directed by feature-film vet Peter Yates (*Bullitt*, *Breaking Away*).

*continued on page 92*

## REVIEWED

### THE TWILIGHT ZONE

1959-64. B&W. Vols. 1-4: *The Invaders/Nothing in the Dark*, *Time Enough at Last/The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street*, *The Odyssey of Flight 33/Nightmare at 20,000 Feet*, *Steel/A Game of Pool*. 50m. ea. \$14.98 ea. CBS/Fox. V image: excel.

### SECRET AGENT

1965. B&W. Vol. 7: *The Man on the Beach*. Patrick McGoochan, Barbara

Steele; dir. Peter Yates. 55m. \$19.98. MPI. V image: fair.

### CAR 54, WHERE ARE YOU?

1961. B&W. Vol. 2: *Home Sweet Sing Sing/Change Your Partner*. Fred Gwynne, Nipsey Russell; dir. Nat Hiken. 50m. \$14.98. Republic. V image: good.

### BONANZA

1964. Vol. 1: *The Pure Truth*. Lorne Greene, Michael Landon, Dan Blocker; dir. Don McDougall. 50m. \$14.98.

Republic. V image: good.

### PETER GUNN

1958-61. B&W. Lynn's *Blues*, *Take Five for Murder*. Herschel Bernardi, Gavin MacLeod; dir. Blake Edwards. 55m. \$19.95. Rhino. V image: fair.

### SPACE PATROL

1951-52. Vol. 3: *The Exploding Stars/The Atomic Vault*, with original commercials. Ed Kemmer, Lyn Osborn, Dik Darley. 60m. \$14.95. Rhino. V image: good.



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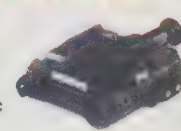
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# Kidvid

**H**ow do you feel about your mother? What's your take on the tangled emotions that can exist between a child and a parent, or a man and a woman?

Whew! You were expecting just a couple of kidvid reviews, weren't you? Reviewing children's video, however, requires considering not just entertainment and production values, but the educational and moral values of programs as well. All of which makes reviewing *Peter Pan* tricky.

Peter Pan is more than just the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up, more than a rascal who takes young Wendy Darling and her two brothers flying away to the land of lost boys, pirates and Indians. The story's hero even spawned a pop psychology term—"the Peter Pan syndrome"—directed at men who just can't make a commitment to a mature relationship. And the classic tale revolves around Peter's search for the perfect mother—someone who will cook and clean for him, tell great stories and *never* tell him what to do. Sir James M. Barrie's classic kidlit character is basically an egocentric little boy who has fascinating adventures and some nifty talents but, honestly, would you want to live with him?

Two new home video versions of *Peter Pan* (and a third, previously available one) make an ongoing, if not mature, relationship with Peter possible.

The first and biggest gun is the Walt Disney animated *Pan*. But I'm sad to say that unlike Barrie's fantasy character, Disney's *Peter Pan* shows signs of age. Feminists (myself included) have long argued against the many retrogressive male/female relationships in the Disney catalogue, and this *Peter Pan* displays



them at their worst. The relationships are straight out of some dumb beach blanket movie, but without the distancing that comes when you acknowledge something as camp. This Peter is the equivalent of a pampered teen idol whose very presence triggers every girl—or fairy—in the vicinity to become a fawning ingenue.

The otherwise intelligent Wendy becomes a babbling babe when she meets him, and Tinker Bell immediately begins a vain, petulant and mean-spirited battle for Peter's affections. The mermaids in the Never-Never-Land lagoon attempt to humiliate and drown Wendy when she shows up with their boy, and the Indian Princess Tiger Lily's eyes flash with love when Peter saves her from the wicked Captain Hook.

The scene which follows that rescue is the nadir of the film, an Indian campfire celebration that smacks of racism with a song that flippantly explains why the red man is red (he's blushing) and why he first said "ugh" (he saw his mother-in-law). Even Wendy gets disgusted and walks out of this party when she's told that squaws can't dance—they should fetch water.

Okay, I may be overreacting, but the highly repetitive nature of kidvid, and the fact that children take so much of their worldview from what they see on

**Lighter Than Air:** Disney's classic animated *Peter Pan* is still a delight, despite some flaws.



the tube, makes mountains out of what might otherwise be molehills. I'm not saying that kids shouldn't watch and enjoy Disney's *Peter Pan*, but they should get a few choice comments from their parents to offset such negative stereotypes.

Having aired my gripes, there is still much to recommend the film. The best character is its worst, the delightfully rotten Captain Hook, a villain who, as voiced by Hans Conreid, has no redeeming social values except the ability to make you laugh out loud. And, of course, there's always that Disney animation to delight the entire family. The directing animators of *Peter Pan* included all the so-called Nine Old Men, the

*continued on page 97*

## REVIEWED

### PETER PAN

1953. anim. 76m. (G) Hi ss \$24.99. Disney. V image: very good. All ages.

### PETER PAN

1960. Mary Martin, Cyril Ritchard. 100m. \$24.99. GoodTimes. V image: fair. All ages.

### PETER PAN

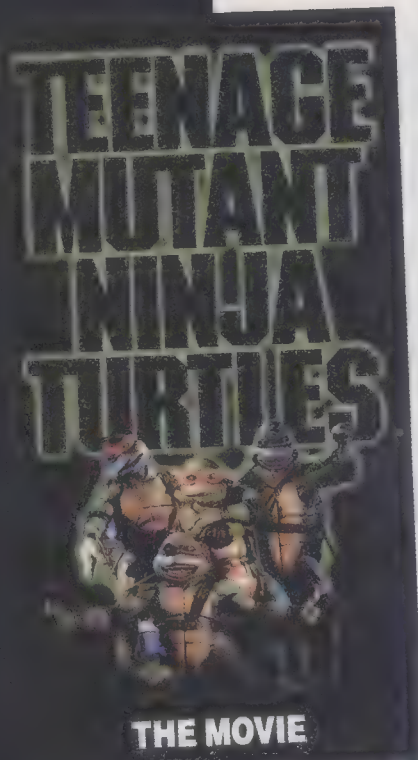
1988. anim. 52m. \$14.95. F.H.E. V image: good. Ages 3-8.



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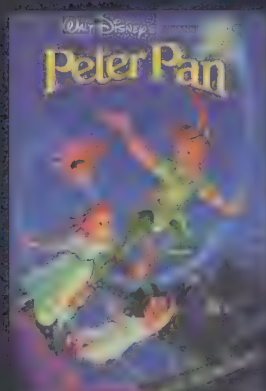
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## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

### Babar's First Step

1989. Anim. Endearing elephant narrates tale of courage to his son Alexander. 49m. \$14.95. Family.

### Betty Boop 60th Anniversary Collector's Edition

1990 comp. B&W. Anim. Razor-sharp transfers of charming, inventive '30s cartoons from the Fleischer studio, available at last in high-resolution laser format. Beware cas. versions retraced in color. 90m. dig. LV \$29.98. Republic.

### Black Adder the Third, Part II

1989 (comp. 1990). Rowan Atkinson, Tony Robinson; dir. Mandie Fletcher. 3 more episodes from droll British sitcom following exploits of foppish dandy and his shrewd butler: *Sense and Senility*, *Amy and Amiability*, *Duel and Duality*. 89m. V only. \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

### Carousel

1956. Gordon MacRae, Shirley Jones, Cameron Mitchell, Jacques D'Amboise; dir. Henry King. Carnival barker falls in love with millworker. Last Rodgers & Hammerstein film to make it to tape (finally!) is one of team's best, with moving performances by MacRae and Jones. One caution: You may cringe at battered-yet-devoted-wife storyline. 128m. St cc \$19.98. CBS/Fox.



**Queen for a Day:** Deborah Kerr makes some friends on the way to Siam in Walter Lang's 1956 *The King and I*.

### Gulliver's Travels

1939. Anim. Dir. Dave Fleischer. Rival studio's answer to Disney's *Snow White* boasts memorable songs and characters, despite weak storyline. This new LV edition, mastered from the original negative, should put earlier public-domain tape and disc versions to shame. 77m. dig. \$29.98. Republic.

### Happy Birthday, Bugs: 50 Looney Years

1990. Live action/anim. TV-special tribute

to filmdom's consummate sharpie, with salutes from Little Richard, Hulk Hogan, Bill Cosby, Whoopi Goldberg, Daffy Duck, many more. 42m. \$14.95. Warner.

### In the Realm of the Senses

1976. Tatsuya Fuji, Eiko Matsuda; dir. Nagisa Oshima. Japanese film once banned as obscene by U.S. Customs: Geisha obsessively attracted to her lover eventually murders and castrates him. 105m. (NR) \$89.95. Fox/Lorber.

### The King and I

1956. Yul Brynner, Deborah Kerr, Rita Moreno, Rex Thompson; dir. Walter Lang. Delightful musical version of *Anna and the King of Siam*, long unavailable on video. Stagey, but with great score and cast, who cares? 133m. (G) St cc \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

### Long Time Comin'

1990 comp. Review of Crosby, Stills & Nash's musical career includes extensive clips from group's TV and concert appearances. 60m. \$19.98. MPI.

### Night of the Living Dead

1968. B&W. Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea, Russell Streiner; dir. George A. Romero. Laser edition of low-budget horror classic. 96m. dig. \$29.98. Republic.

### Penny Serenade

1941. B&W. Cary Grant, Irene Dunne, Beulah Bondi; dir. George Stevens. Excellent romantic melodrama of couple who adopt child after a miscarriage. LV edition mastered from original negative. 125m. dig. \$29.98. Republic.

## Labels For Less

Why did the videophile cross the road? Maybe to check out HBO's "Comedy Club," a collection of outstanding stand-up routines reduced to \$14.99 each. Top billing goes to Richard Lewis: *I'm Exhausted*, *The Roseanne Barr Show*, *Jackie Mason on Broadway*, *Joe Piscopo Live*, *George Carlin Live: What Am I Doing in New Jersey?*, *Martin Mull Live From North Ridgeville, Ohio*, and *Bette Midler: Mondo Beyondo*.

Another \$14.99-per-title HBO promotion offers movies for connoisseurs of comedy (*Back to School*, *Three Amigos*), action (*Raw Deal*, *Code of Silence*), thrillers both serious and funky (*No Way Out*, *F/X*, *The Big Easy* and *The Mean Season* in the former category, *Desperately Seeking Susan* and *Something Wild* in the latter) and graphic, chilling horror (*The Hitcher*).

Four of the six titles just added to MCA's "Movie Mogul" catalogue are eminently collectable at \$19.95: the Marx Brothers romps *Horse Feathers* and *The Cocoanuts* (their film debut), Hitchcock's thrilling *Shadow of a Doubt*, and Spike



**Turturro and Lee in**  
*Do the Right Thing*

Lee's incendiary *Do the Right Thing*. The two comedies rounding out the package, *K-9* and *The Dream Team*, deserve no more than a rental.

—SD

See next page for key to abbreviations.



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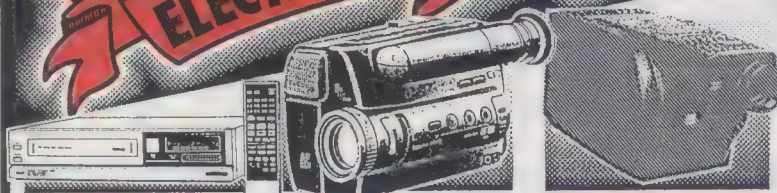
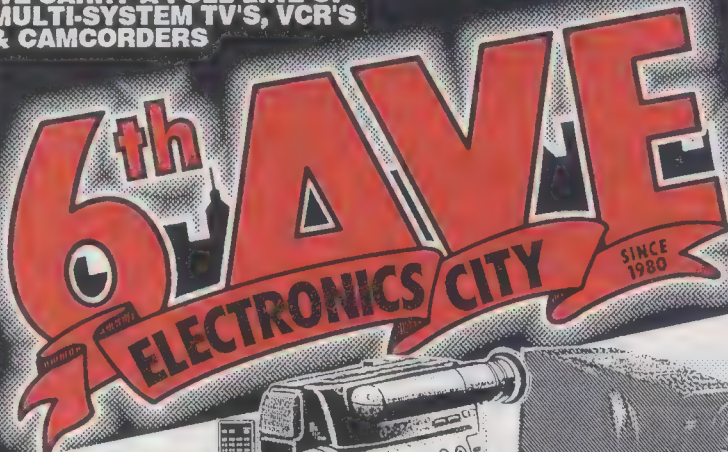
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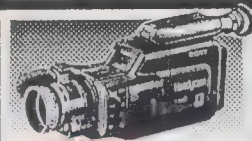
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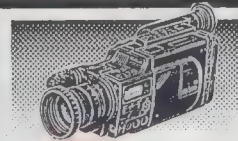
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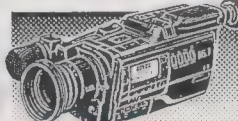
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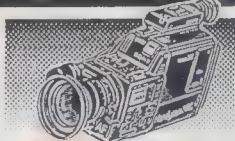
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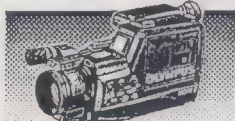
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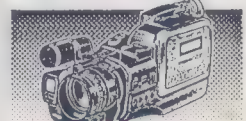
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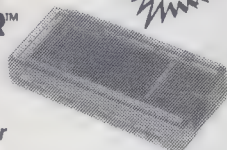


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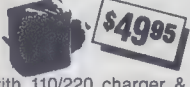
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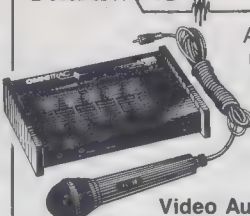
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## DIRECTORY

### Rosalie Goes Shopping

1990. Marianne Saegebrecht, Brad Davis, Judge Reinhold; dir. Percy Adlon. Plump matriarch (Saegebrecht) juggles credit-card debts to keep family rolling in material goods. Quirky fun, though not on the level of star-director team's previous gems *Bagdad Cafe* and *Sugarbaby*. 96m. (PG) ss V only. \$89.95. Vidmark.

### Sesame Songs Home Video: Rock & Roll/Dance-Along!

1990 comps. Sing-along programs culled from long-running children's TV series. 30m. ea. cc \$14.95 ea. Random.

### Sesame Street Home Video Visits the Firehouse/Visits the Hospital

1990. Big Bird is host of these 2 programs aimed at answering children's questions (*Firehouse*) and fears (*Hospital*). 30m. ea. cc \$14.95 ea. Random.

### The Sound of Music: Silver Anniversary Edition

1965. Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, Eleanor Parker, Richard Haydn; pr./dir. Robert Wise. Gorgeous location photography and irresistible score make up for the sappy screenplay of this most popular of all film musicals. 173m. (G) ss cc 2 cas. \$24.98 (RE). CBS/Fox.

### State Fair

1945. Jeanne Crain, Dick Haymes, Dana Andrews, Fay Bainter; dir. Walter Lang. Okay musical about farm family preparing for Iowa State Fair, enjoyable for rich color and lovely Rodgers and Hammerstein songs. 100m. St (re-channelled from mono tracks) cc \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

## PROGRAM LEGEND

### DATE

Varies according to type of program.

**Films:** original theatrical release.

**Made-for-broadcast:** first telecast.

**Made-for-video:** first release in any format.

**Compilations:** production of collected work.

### FORMAT

All tape programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted.

**B:** Beta cassette

**V:** VHS cassette

**LV:** 8mm cassette

**CLV:** videodisc in CLV or

CAV format.

### AUDIO

All available info is provided. Tapes generally have **HI-FI** tracks; discs are **CX** encoded.

**St:** stereo

**ss:** Dolby surround stereo

**cc:** closed-captioned

### IMAGE RATING

For theatrical releases, ratings of **excellent**, **good**, **fair** and **poor** refer to transfer quality and visual appearance; for non-theatrical programs, to overall visual quality.

### ETCETERA

Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, X) are noted when available. All programs are in color unless noted.

**anim:** animated

**B&W:** black & white

**cas.:** videocassette

**comp.:** compilation

**czd.:** colorized

**dig.:** digital

**dir.:** directed by

**dub.:** dubbed

**let.:** letterboxed

**m.:** minutes

**n.a.:** not available

**nar.:** narrated by

**NR:** not rated

**pr.:** produced by

**RE:** reissue

**sim.:** simulated

**Sp.:** Spanish

**sub.:** subtitled

**TVM:** made for television

**wr.:** written by

**2ap:** second audio channel





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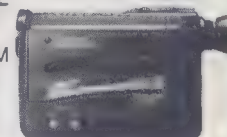
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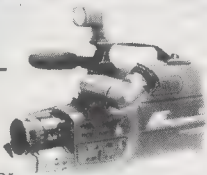
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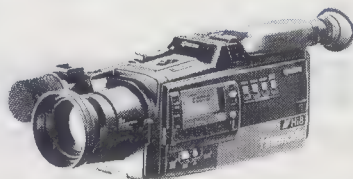
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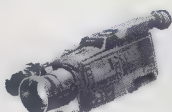


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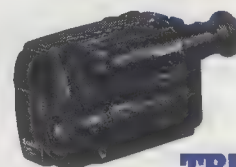


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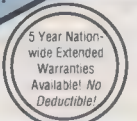
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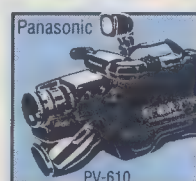
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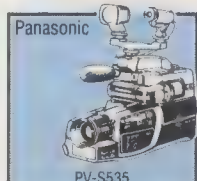
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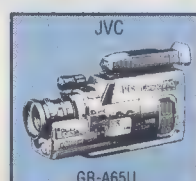
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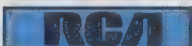


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## DIRECTORY

### Stella

1990. Bette Midler, John Goodman, Trini Alvarado, Stephen Collins, Marsha Mason; dir. John Erman. Mom sacrifices all to give daughter life of privilege. Good cast goes to waste in a misconceived update of perennial soap *Stella Dallas*. 109m. (PG-13) ss cc \$89.95. Touchstone.

### Sweatin' to the Oldies

1988. Richard Simmons; dir. E.H. Shipley. Equally compelling as an exercise tape and as a study in megalomania. 45m. \$39.98. Warner.

### The Young Ones

1988 (comp. 1990). Ade Edmondson, Rik Mayall, Nigel Planer, Christopher Ryan; dir. Geoffrey Posner. Episodes of British comedy series aired on MTV. Three punkish teens appall their elders—and most viewers. 96m. V only. \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

### Elvis: The Great Performances

1990 comps. Color/B&W. Dir. Andrew Solt. Two-cas. concert collection of Presley rendering his best-known songs: Vol. 1, *Center Stage*, Vol. 2, *The Man and His Music*. Includes footage of Presley's first screen test, interviews, extensive liner notes. Approx. 55m. ea. ss B V LV \$19.99 ea. Buena Vista.

### The James Dean 35th Anniversary Collection

1990 comp. Deluxe boxed package commemorating star's death. Includes documentary *Forever James Dean* (1988) plus new transfers of *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) and *East of Eden* (1955) mastered from original negatives and 4-channel stereo tracks, plus *Giant* (1956) remixed for surround. Laser edition includes let. version of *Rebel and Eden*. \$99.92 cas., \$119.92 LV. Titles also available separately on cas. only, \$19.98 ea. except *Giant* and *Forever*, \$29.98 ea. Warner.

## DRAMA

### Beauty and the Beast: Though Lovers Be Lost

1990. Linda Hamilton, Ron Perlman, Roy Dotrice, Jay Acovone; dir. Victor Lobi. From now-canceled TV series. 90m. cc \$19.98. Republic.

### Blossoms in the Dust

1941. Greer Garson, Walter Pidgeon, Felix Bressart; dir. Mervyn LeRoy. After losing her husband and child, a Texas woman founds an orphanage. 100m. \$19.98. MGM/UA.

### China Beach

1988. Dana Delany, Nan Woods, Michael Boatman; dir. Rod Holcomb. TV pilot that launched series: American nurses in Vietnam. 95m. St cc \$79.95. Warner.

### The Handmaid's Tale

1990. Natasha Richardson, Robert Duvall, Faye Dunaway, Elizabeth McGovern, Aidan Quinn; wr. Harold Pinter; dir. Volker Schlöndorff. From Margaret Atwood's grim novel: future society where women are reproductive slaves. 109m. (R) ss cc V only. \$89.99. HBO.

### Last Year at Marienbad

1961. B&W. Delphine Seyrig, Giorgio Albertazzi; dir. Alain Resnais. Landmark experimental film offers fragmented account of an apparently abortive romantic tryst at a deserted spa. There's not a moment in it that conforms to conventional narrative concerns. 90m. let. sub. \$29.95. Connoisseur.

### The Next Voice You Hear

1950. B&W. James Whitmore, Nancy Davis (Reagan), Lillian Bronson; dir. William Wellman. A radio address by God brings hope to dispirited factory worker and his family. 84m. \$19.98. MGM/UA.

### A Patch of Blue

1965. B&W. Sidney Poitier, Elizabeth Hartman, Shelley Winters; wr./dir. Guy Green. Blind girl in love with black man. Winters, as shrewish mother, won an Oscar. 106m. \$19.98. MGM/UA.

## VIDEO DISCS

### The Blues Brothers

1980. John Belushi, Dan Aykroyd. Comedy. 130m. (R) dig. side 3 CAV. \$39.98. MCA (RE).

### Cabaret

1972. Liza Minnelli, Michael York; dir. Bob Fosse. Musical. This version replaces abridged 119m. disc. 128m. (PG) St dig. 3 sides. \$49.98. CBS/Fox (RE).

### Cry-Baby

See *Highlights*. ss dig. \$34.98. MCA.

### Girl Crazy

1943. B&W. Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland. Musical. 99m. dig. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

### Ice Station Zebra

1968. Rock Hudson, Ernest Borgnine. Action. 148m. (G) St dig. let. 3 sides. \$39.98. MGM/UA.

### The Little Mermaid

1989. Anim. Wr./dir. John Musker, Ron Clements. Musical fairy tale. 83m. (G) ss dig. \$29.99 CAV \$39.99. Disney.

### Sadie Thompson

1928. B&W. Gloria Swanson, Lionel Barrymore; dir. Raoul Walsh. Silent drama with orchestral score. 97m. dig. \$49.95. Image.

### Second Chorus

1940. B&W. Fred Astaire, Paulette Goddard. Musical. 83m. dig. \$29.98. Republic.

### Superman

1978. Christopher Reeve, Margot Kidder. Action. 143m. (PG) ss dig. let. 3 sides. \$29.98. Warner.

### This Land Is Mine

1943. B&W. Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara; dir. Jean Renoir. Drama. 103m. dig. \$39.95. Image.

### Till the Clouds Roll By

1946. Robert Walker, Van Heflin, Judy Garland. Musical. 137m. dig. 3 sides. \$39.98. MGM/UA.

### To Have and Have Not

1944. B&W. Humphrey Bogart, Lauren



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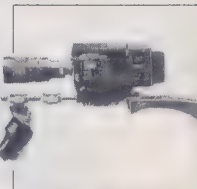
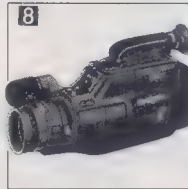
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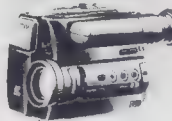
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**Canon JVC SONY**  
**Panasonic HITACHI RCA**  
**Nikon Quasar MAGNAVOX**  
**MINOLTA OLYMPUS PENTAX**  
**FUJI SUNPAK CHINON**  
**TDK SIGMA Tokina Kodak**  
**SLIK Mamiya BRONICA bogen**  
**RICOH Polaroid Vivitar BESELER**  
**YASHICA TAMRON Konica**



**PV-610 VHS** Call  
**CAMCORDERS**  
PV-602 2 Lux Call  
PV-610 8X Zoom Call  
PV-530 Digital Call  
PV-645 10X Zoom Call

**CAMCORDERS**

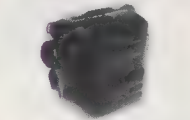
**RCA**  
Authorized RCA Dealer

**JVC**  
Authorized RCA Dealer

**CAMCORDERS**  
CCD-F33 Call  
CCD-F55 Call  
CCD-F77 Call  
CCD-TR 4 Call  
CCD-TR-6 Call  
CCD-TR-7 Call  
CCD-SP9 Call  
EDC-55 Call  
EVC-X10 Call

**Super VHS Format**  
Digital Still/Scrobo  
● High-Sensitivity 11 Lux  
● F1.2 2-Speed 8x Power  
Zoom Lens  
● MOS Image Sensor  
● Cylinder Stabilizer/  
Type Tracker  
● NO Circuitry  
● Variable speed shutter  
Limited to Stock on Hand  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$999.85**

**Quasar**



**EVAPORATED TAPE**  
E6-120 HME 2 Hr. Call  
E6-60 HME 1 Hr. Call  
E6-20 HME 20 Min. Call  
Call for price



**Complete Sony**  
Camcorder Line  
In Stock



**CAMCORDERS**  
VM-705 8X Zoom 649.85  
VM-706 8X Zoom 699.85  
VM-708 Digital Call  
VM-500 VHS-C Call  
VM-505 8X Zoom Call  
VM-508 Digital Call

**MAGNAVOX**  
Authorized Magnavox Dealer

**VHS CAMCORDERS**  
CC-390 2 Lux Call  
CC-405 8X Zoom Call  
CC-415 Pro-Edit Call  
CC-510 10X Zoom Call  
CC-520 10X Zoom Call  
CC-560 S-VHS Call

**CAMCORDERS**  
"Comes with hard case."  
GR-A1 New Call  
GR-A67\* BX1 Zoom Call  
GR-A65\* S-VHS-C Call  
GR-S70\* Hi-Fi Call  
GF-502\* 4 Head Hi-Fi Call  
GF-550 S-VHS Call

**BETA**  
SL-S390 Call  
SL-Hi-Fi 360, 870D Call

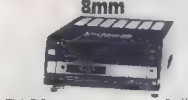
**10x Power Zoom Lens**  
2 Lux Low Light  
● Titer w/built-in Char-  
acter Generator  
● Auto-Shot AX Program AE  
● Programmable Synchro  
Edit  
● Cordless Movie Light  
● Variable Speed Zoom  
w/hard carrying case  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$899.85**

**VIDEO RECORDERS**  
VH-6200 Hi-Fi 199.85  
VH-6205 3-Head 279.85  
VH-6300 3-Head 329.85  
VH-6400 4-Head 329.85  
VH-6405 Hi-Fi Call

**CAMCORDERS**  
CVL-300 Digital Call  
CVL-325 Digital Call  
CVL-335 Digital Call  
CVL-345 Digital Call  
CVL-610 Digital Call

**VIDEO RECORDERS**  
VR-330 VHS HQ Call  
VR-340 VHS HQ Call  
VR-345 Stereo Call  
VR-500 4 Head Call  
VR-520 Special Effects Call  
VR-671 Hi-Fi Call  
VR-675 Hi-Fi Special F X Call  
VR-685 Hi-Fi Jog Shuttle Call

**VIDEO RECORDERS**  
HR-D 4050 Call  
HR-D 660 4 Head Call  
HR-D 780 Hi-Fi Call  
HR-D 850 4 Head Hi-Fi Call  
HR-D 860 Hi-Fi Call  
HR-D 850 Hi-Fi Digital Call



**PERSONAL VIDEO**  
GV-8 Call  
GV-9 Call  
EV-DT1 Call  
EV-S1 Call  
EV-S1 Call  
CCD-G1 Call

**COMBINATION VCR/TV**  
VV-9407 7" Color Call  
VV-9213 13" Color Call  
VV-8220 20" Color Call  
VV-9427 27" Color Call  
VV-9537 27" Hi-Fi Call

**VIDEO RECORDERS**  
VR-9912 Call  
VR-9940 4 Head Call  
VR-9946 4 Head Hi-Fi Call  
VR-9960 Hi-Fi Call  
VR-9965 Call  
Call for price.

**RCA VIDEO ACCESSORIES**  
AVS-020 Synchro cable Call  
CCA-030 Cha generator Call  
CPS-03 Power Supply Call  
CRM-020 Pause Control Call  
DCC-012 Card Call  
DCC-086 Card Call  
VCC-1000 Studio Pro Call  
VM-002 Microphone Call  
VM-003 Microphone Call

**SUPER VHS VCR**  
HR-S 5500 Call  
HR-S 6600 Call  
HR-S 10,000 Call  
HR-SC 1000 Call

**VIDEO ACCESSORIES**  
JX-S 100 AV Selector Call  
JX-S 300 AV Selector Call  
JX-S 900 AV Selector Call  
JX-S V55 Edit Call  
RM-V1000 Controller Call  
M2-350 Microphone Call  
M2-707 Microphone Call  
WM-V1U Microphone Call  
CC-P500 Titrer Call  
CC-V60 Titrer Call  
Call for more

**SONY ACCESSORIES**  
RM-E 300 XV-900 Call  
XV-1600 XV-T500 Call  
XV-D 300 RM-152K Call  
AC-V 55 RM-95 Call  
VCL-1537 VCL-0537 Call  
VF-37M XV-M30 Call

**PENTAX**  
Authorized Pentax Dealer  
PV-EM 100A New Call

**BEST BUY VCR**  
4 HEAD DOUBLE AZIMUTH  
ON-SCREEN PROGRAMMING  
● 155 Ch Digital Quartz Tuning  
● 57 Function Remote  
● Double-Fine Slow Motion  
● AV In/Out Terminal  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$239.85**

**OLYMPUS**  
Authorized Olympus Dealer

**VIDEO TAPES**  
FUJI, SONY, JVC  
Call for price!

**VIDEO LENS KIT**  
For SONY CCD-TR Series  
● 1.5X Telephoto  
● 0.85X Wide Angle  
● Instructions  
● Lens Caps  
● Container Case  
**ALL \$59.85**

**2X POWER ZOOM LENS**  
DIGITAL SPECIAL EFFECTS  
● Digital Special Effects 11 Lux  
● 2-Speed 8-1 Power Zoom  
w/macro  
● 10W Color Enhancement light  
● Built-in Speaker  
● Flying erase head  
w/hard carrying case  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$999.85**

**MINOLTA**  
Authorized Minolta Dealer  
Master C-50 VHS-C Call  
Master C-51 New Call  
CR-80AF 8x Zoom Call  
CR-81AF 8x Zoom Call

**BEST BUY VCR**  
HI-FI-STEREO (90 db)  
MTS BROADCAST STEREO  
● 4-Head Double Azimuth  
● 47 Function Remote  
● Variable Double-Fine Slow Motion  
● Noiseless Field Still  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$329.85**

**AUDIO VIDEO SELECTOR**  
JVC JX-S100 Call  
JVC JX-S300 Call  
JVC JX-S900 Call  
Azden AV-S20 Call

**MICROPHONES**  
JVC M2-350 Call  
JVC M2-707 Call  
JVC WM-V1U Call  
Azden EC2-660 Call  
Azden WM5-PRO Call  
RCA WM-002 Call  
RCA WM-005 Call  
Nady 151 V8 Call

**VIDEO LIGHTS**  
**SUNPAK**

**Canon XAPSHOT**  
Photography for the video generation.  
**FILMLESS CAMERA**  
SALE \$389.85

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155 CH. DIGITAL  
QUARTZ TUNING  
MTS BROADCAST STEREO  
● On-Screen Display Program  
● Quick Play  
● 35 Function Remote  
● AV In/Out Terminal  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$199.85**

**BEST BUY VCR**  
HI-FI-STEREO (90 db)  
MTS BROADCAST STEREO  
● 4-Head Double Azimuth  
● 47 Function Remote  
● Variable Double-Fine Slow Motion  
● Noiseless Field Still  
**SPECIAL PRICE \$329.85**

**EDITORS**  
JVC JX-S55 Call  
JVC V1000U Call  
Azden VF-100 Call  
RCA Studio Pro Call  
Sima Sound Mixer Call

**VIDEO LENSES**  
**TOKINA**  
2.0X Telephoto \$49.85  
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0.5X Professional Call  
4.0X Telephoto Call  
3.5X Telephoto Call  
12X Telephoto Call  
2.5-50X Zoom Call

Auto CV-300 Call  
Auto CV-205 Call  
CV-300 99.85  
CV-320 79.85  
CV-150 69.85  
CV-200 77.85  
CL-5 59.85  
CL-8 Battery 37.85

**CHARACTER GENERATORS**  
JVC CG-P50 Call  
JVC CG-V60 Call  
RCA VTU 090 Call  
RCA CGA030 Call

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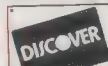
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212-397-3056



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NEW

**CCD V-101**  
**Hi-8**

AFM-HiFi Stereo  
3 Lux  
8:1 Zoom  
1/10,000 Shutter

**CCD V-99 ... \$1048**



20 PC. PKG.  
**CALL**

### SONY

New

**F-77**

8-1 ZOOM  
2 Lux  
Stereo

Digital Super imposer **\$948**

**F-55 ... \$748**

**F-33 ... \$628**

**F-70 ... \$688**



20 PC. PKG.

### PANASONIC

New VHS

**PV-520**

3 Lux  
Built-in Video Light

**\$688**

**PV-602 ... \$618**

**PV-610 ... \$688**

**PV-645 12x ZOOM \$898**

**PV-620 ... CALL**



### PANASONIC

**PV-530**

Built-in Light  
8:1 Zoom  
1 Lux  
Digital Effects

**\$948**

**PVS-575 ... Call**

**PVS-550 ... Call**

**PV-660 96x Zoom Call**

**PV-535 ... Call**



### RICOH

**R-808 H**

Hi-8  
AFM HiFi  
Stereo

3 Lux  
8:1 Zoom  
1/10,000 Shutter  
RICOH Optics  
1 Yr. Guarantee

Complete 20 pc. package Camera, Battery/Charger, Strap, Lens Cap, Lens Shade, Handle, AV Adaptor, AV Cable, Cleaning Kit, Dubbing Cables, Tape, Tripod, 75/300 adaptor, trans. 5 Free VHS.



20 PC. PKG.  
New  
**CALL**  
WIRELESS  
REMOTE

### RICOH

**R-830 New**

RICOH OPTICS  
8 x 1 Zoom  
Ricoh Optics

2 Lux  
10,000 Shutter  
Digital Super imposer  
Audio/Video Fade Wind Switch  
WIRELESS REMOTE

**R-860 Stereo. CALL**



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**V-20 Pro Edit**

3 Lux CCD Chip  
10:1 Maxum  
Character Generator  
1/10,000 Shutter  
AE Program  
Speaker.

20 PC. PKG. 2 Yr. Guarantee

**V-16 ... CALL**

**V-18 ... CALL**

**C-51 ... CALL**



### CHINON

**CVT-73**

Built-in Light  
8:1 Zoom  
1 Lux  
Digital Effects  
Built-in Speaker  
Chinon Optics

4 Yr. Guarantee

**CVT-84 ... CALL**

**CVT-124 96 X ZOOM ... CALL**



20 PC. PKG.

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**NEW!**  
**SONY TR-7**  
**World's Smallest**  
**Camcorder**

8-1 Zoom  
HiFi Stereo  
410,000 Pixe!  
20 Pc. Pkg.

**TR-5 ... \$748**

**TR-4 ... CALL**



**\$988**

### YASHICA

**NEW**

**KX-90**

**World's new**  
**Camcorder.**

8-1 Zoom  
Hi Fi  
410, Pixel  
Yashica Optics  
1yr Guarantee.

**CALL**

**KX-70 .. CALL**



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### RCA

8:1 Zoom,  
4 Lux,  
Titrting,  
Audio Dub  
Video Dub

20 PC. PKG. **\$728** -320

**CC-360 .. \$948**

**CC-311 .. \$648**

**CC-415 .. \$688**

**CC-520 .. \$888**



### CANON

**CANON A-1**

**MK-II**  
Hi Band 8

20 PC. PKG. **CALL**

**H-800 ... \$988**

**E-680 ... \$878**

**E-640 ... \$878**

**E-51 ... \$648**

**E-53 ... CALL**

**New-E-06 ... \$888**



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**SV-9**

Wireless Remote  
8 x 1 Zoom, Wide  
Macro/High Speed  
Shutter 180° Flex Grip  
Sports Finder  
Two Field Metering  
Built in Tilt  
Auto Fade

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**5 YR. GUARANTEE**



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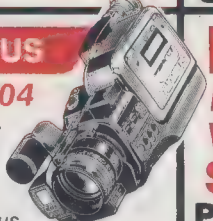
### OLYMPUS

**Hi-8 VX-804**

PCM DIGITAL  
STEREO  
16 x 1 ZOOM

390,000 Pixel  
Macro Auto Focus  
Auto/Manual Iris  
6 Speed Shutter  
Zuicko Optics

**VX-81 ... CALL**



20 PC. PKG.

### PANASONIC

**PV120**

**VHS-C**

**\$598**

**PVS-140 ... \$888**

**PVS-160 ... Call**

**PV-10 ... \$688**

**PV-20 ... Call**

**PV-40 ... Call**



20 PC. PKG.

### JVC

**GRC-65u**

**VHS-C**

8:1 Zoom Titrting,  
20 Pc. Pkg. 3 Lux **CALL**

**GRS-77U . \$798**

**GRS-70U . \$848**

**GRS-707 . CALL**



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#### AUTO FOCUS

Wide Angle . **\$148**

2x Tele . **\$138** **FILTER**

3x . **\$188** **KIT**

5x . **\$288** **\$69**

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• AG-460 C • 300 CLE C

• AG-450 A • WV-200 CLE A

• AG-180 L • AG-1960 L

• AG-170-L L • AG-1950 L

#### S/VCR

• AG-1830 C

• AG-730 A

• AG-7100 L

• AG-95 L

### PAL/SECAM CAMERAS/VCR

• Sony V-30. **\$598**

• Sony F-380 **CALL**

• Sony F-150 **CALL**

• Sony F-500 **\$888**

• Sony V-900 **CALL**

• National M-7 **CALL**

• National MC-30 **CALL**

• National NV-M8000 SVHS **CALL**

• JVC-GR44 E **CALL**

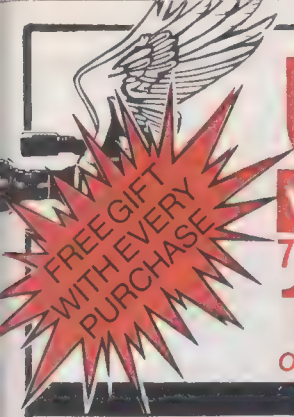
• JVC GR-77EG SVHS-C **CALL**

VCR's Multi System Discounted

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All-in-One Videolight/Battery  
with Sensor Automatically  
Adjusts Light Output!



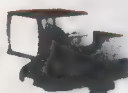
Auto CV-300

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Now you can get perfect lighting every  
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automatically adjusts light output  
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#### SUNPAK

All-in-One  
Videolight  
w/BATT  
+ CHARGER



CV-20S **68.00**

Special 20w bulb generates 60w of  
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Plus—NiCd battery runs light up to  
40 minutes! Includes charger and soft  
light filter!

Our Newest & Best Value

#### SUNPAK

CV-20SA  
AUTO SENSOR

All-In-One  
Videolight  
w/BATT  
+ CHARGER



Special 20w bulb generates 60w of  
light intensity. New lightweight design.  
Auto Sensor adjusts to all lighting  
situations. Uses Sony NP55H77 Type  
Batt.

**\$98**

#### SIMA

Auto Sensor  
Light

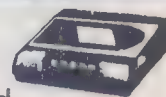


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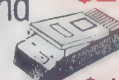
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Rewind  
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151 VR

#### AZDEN

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2 Mile System



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PRO NADY  
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MixerMike

On camera hi-fidelity

'Twas not long before Christmas,  
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Good folks were pondering  
The gifts they would hand  
To their loved ones...  
Their neighbors...  
Co-workers...  
And friends.  
Give a sweater?...  
A wallet?...  
A (gulp!) tie  
Again?

"Something different," they cried,  
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(Now, won't that be nice?)



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magazine

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Hi-8

AFM-HiFi Stereo  
3 Lux  
8:1 Zoom  
1/10,000 Shutter

CCD V-99 ...\$1048



20 PC. PKG.  
**CALL**

SONY

New  
F-77

8-1 ZOOM  
2 Lux  
Stereo  
Digital Super imposer

F-55 ..... \$748

F-33 ..... \$628

F-70 ..... \$688



20 PC. PKG.

PANASONIC

New VHS  
PV-520

3 Lux  
Built-in 20 PC. PKG.  
Video Light

PV-602 ..... \$618

PV-610 ..... \$688

PV-645 12 x ZOOM \$898

PV-620 ..... **CALL**



**\$688**

PANASONIC

PV-530

Built-in Light  
8:1 Zoom  
1 Lux 20 PC. PKG.  
Digital Effects

PVS-575 .... **Call**

PVS-550 .... **Call**

PV-660 96x Zoom **Call**

PV-535 .... **Call**



**\$948**

RICOH

R-808 H

Hi-8  
AFM HiFi



RICOH

R-830 New

RICOH OPTICS 20 PC.  
8 x 1 Zoom



MINOLTA

V-20 Pro Edit

3 Lux CCD Chip  
10:1 Maxxum



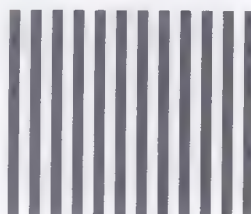
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CVT-73

Built-in Light  
8:1 Zoom



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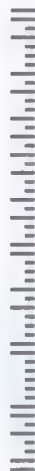
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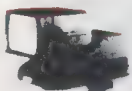
Auto CV-300

**\$135**

Now you can get perfect lighting every time you shoot. New compact light automatically adjusts light output from 18-30w as needed.

#### SUNPAK

All-in-One Videolight w/BATT + CHARGER



CV-20S **68.00**

Special 20w bulb generates 60w of light intensity. New lightweight design. Plus—NiCd battery runs light up to 40 minutes! Includes charger and soft light filter!

Our Newest & Best Value

#### SUNPAK

CV-20SA AUTO SENSOR

All-In-One Videolight w/BATT + CHARGER



Special 20w bulb generates 60w of light intensity. New lightweight design. Auto Sensor adjusts to all lighting situations. Uses Sony NP55H77 Type Batt.

**\$98**

#### SIMA

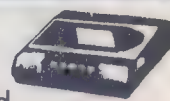
Auto Sensor Light



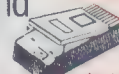
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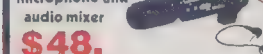


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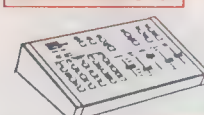
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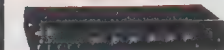


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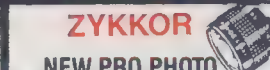


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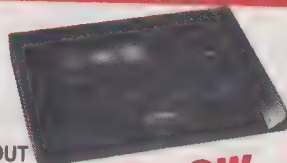
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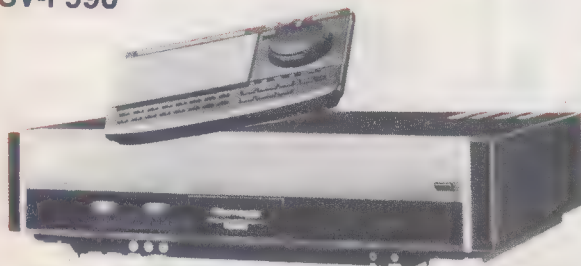
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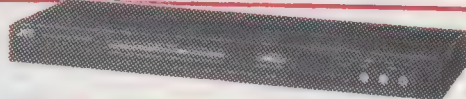
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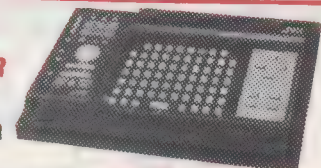
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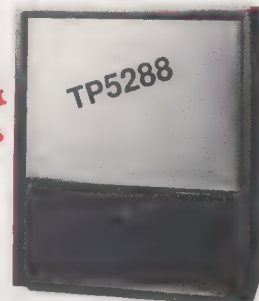
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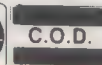
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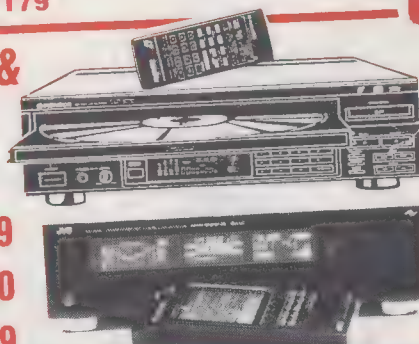
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Bacall; dir. Howard Hawks. Drama. 100m. dig. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

## Torch Song

1953. B&W. Joan Crawford, Michael Wilding. Campy melodrama. 90m. dig. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

## True Love

1989. Annabella Sciorra, Ron Eldard. Comedy. 101m. (R) ss cc dig. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

## Words and Music

1948. Mickey Rooney, June Allyson, Judy Garland. Musical. 119m. dig. 3 sides. \$39.98. MGM/UA.

## SOURCES

Tapes and discs are not available for sale directly from companies listed unless the phone number given specifies "orders." See end of listings for phone/mail-order distributors that may be able to help locate

desired releases.

**Buena Vista** Home Video, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521; 818-560-1000.

**CBS/Fox** Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10036; 212-819-3200.

**Connoisseur** Video Collection, 8436 West 3rd St., Suite 600, Los Angeles, CA 90048; 213-653-8873.

Walt **Disney** Home Video: see **Buena Vista**.

**Family** Home Entertainment: see **IVE**.

**Fox/Lorber** Home Video, 432 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016; 212-686-6777.

**Hanna-Barbera** Home Video, 3400 Ca-huenga Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90068-1376; 213-851-5000.

**HBO** Video, 1100 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10036; 212-512-1000.

**Image** Entertainment (laserdiscs), 6311 Romaine St., Hollywood, CA 90038; 213-468-8867, 800-421-4585.

**IVE**, 15400 Sherman Way, P.O. Box 10124, Van Nuys, CA 91410-0124; 818-908-0303.

**MCA/Universal** Home Video, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, CA 91608; 818-777-4315.

**MGM/UA** Home Video, 10000 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232; 213-280-6000, orders 800-443-5500 ext. 798.

**MPI** Home Video, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forest, IL 60452; 708-687-7881.

**Nelson** Entertainment, 335 N. Maple Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210; 213-285-6000.

**Pioneer** LDCA, 2265 East 220 St., Long Beach, CA 90810; 213-835-6177.

**Public Media** Video, 5547 N. Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, IL 60640; 313-878-7300.

**Random** House Home Video, 225 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10003; 212-254-1600.

**Republic** Pictures Home Video, 12636 Beatrice St., Los Angeles, CA 90066-0930; 213-306-4040.

**Touchstone** Home Video: see **Buena Vista**.

**Unicorn** Video, 9811 Independence Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311; 818-407-1333.

**Vidmark** Entertainment, 2901 Ocean Pk. Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405; 213-399-8877.

**Warner** Home Video, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522; 818-954-6000.

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**Movies Unlimited**, 6736 Castor Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19149; 800-523-0823.

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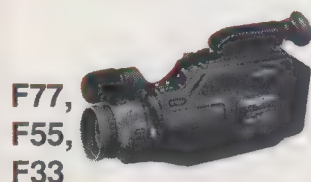
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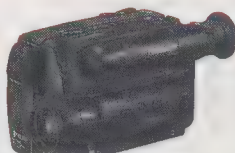
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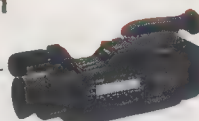


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## LASERDISCS

continued from page 70

*becca* (1940) provides real insight into the movie-making machinery of the old Hollywood studio system. The supplement's casting notes and production correspondence, as well as film historian Leonard J. Leff's second-track audio commentary, all point to the tense relationship between Hitchcock and producer David O. Selznick as they struggled for control of the film. Equally illuminating are screen tests by Anne Baxter, Margaret Sullivan, Loretta Young, Vivien Leigh and Joan Fontaine, which prove the ultimate wisdom of choosing Fontaine for the starring role opposite Laurence Olivier.

But the star of this show is the film itself. Much of *Rebecca's* first half has a predictable, almost pedestrian feel. But just when all seems lost, it abruptly changes gears in classic Hitchcock fashion. The plot, which involves an American ingenue (Fontaine) marrying a wealthy Englishman (Olivier) only to be haunted by the sins of his past, is brimming with surprises. And the relentless pressure from above — this was Hitchcock's first Hollywood film — appear to have only inspired the director. A reduced-price CLV version of the film retains the immaculate transfer and audio commentary of the CAV edition, while foregoing the lengthy supplement. ■

## TELEVISION

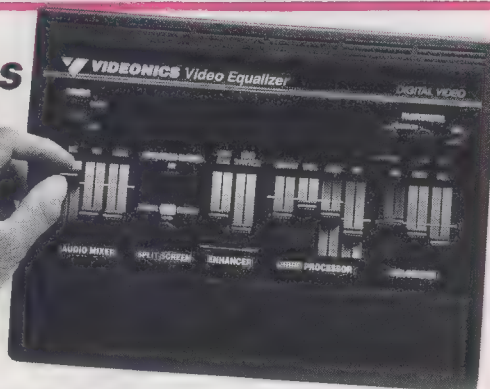
continued from page 72

For every *Secret Agent* that comes along, of course, there are ten *Peter Gunns* (NBC, 1958-60; ABC, 1960-61). Blake Edwards' suave detective is indeed, as the cassette box claims, *the coolest private eye ever!* In all his kitschy glory, Gunn (Craig Stevens) is a hep sixties cat who handles chicks and martinis with equal grace. "Nobody goes underground without you knowing about it," he tells his ever-handy cabbie informant, in the kind of scene *Police Squad!* parodied so wickedly and well.

A nostalgic rather than kitschy charm buoys the first four, two-episode volumes of *Car 54, Where Are You?* (NBC, 1961-63) and the first four, one-episode volumes of *Bonanza* (NBC, 1959-73). *Car 54* was the work of Nat Hiken, creator of *The Phil Silvers Show*, a.k.a. *Sergeant Bilko*. This subsequent sitcom about two Bronx police officers — talkative, gravelly voiced Gunther Toody (Joe E. Ross) and quiet beanpole Francis Muldoon (Fred Gwynne) — is



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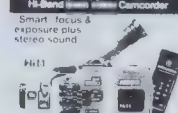
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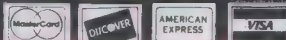
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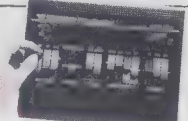
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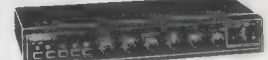
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VDM300S

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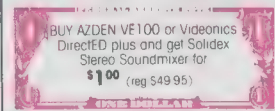
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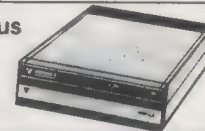
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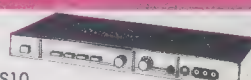
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- Replaces up to 4 different remotes
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Universal  
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- Replaces up to 8 different remotes
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Deluxe  
Universal  
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- Touch-Sensitive LCD panel for extraordinary ease of use
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Mini zoom features slide switch for variable zoom, high cut filter switch and battery check LED. 35' range

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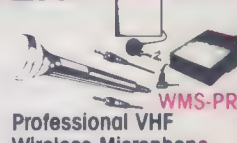


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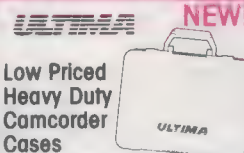
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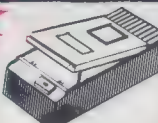
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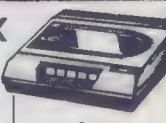
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less sharp-tongued and knowing. Broad and cuddly instead, it's also much less funny—though it does have occasional, vaudevillian moments of inspired humor.

*Bonanza* hasn't even Nat Hiken's imprimatur to raise it above its "amiable family drama" niche. Ben Cartwright (Lorne Greene) and his sons dress as much like Old West ranchers as the cast of *Urban Cowboy*. And the outdoor sets look about as real as those in the original *Star Trek*. But there's a silly, old-fashioned charm to such episodes as *The Pure Truth*, one of the lighter outings, where dim-bulb Hoss (Dan Blocker) makes a mess of things. And the cassettes showcase the series' color nicely.

For true nostalgia, you can't do better than *Space Patrol* (local, 1950-51; ABC, 1951-55). In this live, primordial children's show, real-life World War II air hero Ed Kemmer plays 30th-century Commander Buzz Corry of the United Planets. Watching the two half-hour episodes on volume three, you wonder in slack-jawed awe whether kids ever really were such kids that they could be impressed by the commander's noble exploits—or by the cardboard *Space Patrol* rocket cockpit they could get for 25 cents and a Nestle's Cocoa label. ■

## KIDVID

continued from page 74

team responsible for much of what we remember today as classic Disney animation. It's easy to take their talents for granted, but just compare the rich, deep colors and multi-level action of this film to the cranked-out, computer-generated trash of many contemporary cartoons. Visually, *Peter Pan* lives up to the claims of the Disney hype machine.

In keeping with Disney's policy toward its cartoon classics, this video (and, incidentally, *The Little Mermaid*) will be taken off sale on April 30 of next year. So you have some time to decide for yourself, given the good points and the bad, if you want to make a commitment to this handsome lad.

The other hot new video release of *Peter Pan* is the long-awaited 1960 live-action TV special which launched (given the strings and pulleys that made her fly, you can take that literally) Mary Martin to national stardom. A woman playing Pan is not so unusual—that's how it was done in Barrie's original 1904 London stage play. A road show version years later inspired young Walt Disney, though his cartoon version wasn't released until 1953. (Mary Martin's Broadway *Pan* followed a year later.) ▶

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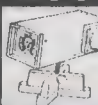
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Lest I be accused of taking the psychological implications too seriously, I'll leave it to professionals to answer whether having a girl portray a boy that female characters covet creates questions in anyone's mind but mine. (My four year-old daughter seemed to take the gender bending in stride.) Besides, there's something about Mary Martin's Pan that makes him much more appealing than the cartoon counterpart.

Sure, you can see the occasional wire that supports Martin and company when they fly to Never-Never-Land, but the strength of the story isn't in visual elements but in those that must be imagined in the heart. The TV *Pan* was performed in the manner of the hit Broadway play and was presented as a live broadcast special 30 years ago. Of course, the image we see now is less defined than that of modern TV programming, and the sets are sometimes deliciously naive, but the show is happily at home on the small screen. The simplicity of the production also evokes an innocence that smooths the rough edges of Peter's and Wendy's and Tinker Bell's odd triangle.

The performers—especially Cyril

Ritchard as Hook, and Sondra Lee as Tiger Lily—rise to the occasion of their televised "opening night," and the songs and dancing are joyous examples of the forgotten strength of musical comedy theater.

Finally, there's one more *Pan* to ponder. Another animated version of Barrie's tale was released about two years ago by an Australian production house, and is still available. The animation can't hold a candle to the Disney film, but it is better than the knock-off product that graces much of Saturday morning.

This Aussie take on the *Pan* story puts the emphasis on Wendy as a surrogate mother to the lost boys rather than as a potential girlfriend to Peter, and Tinker Bell actually saves Wendy's life in one scene! Still, there's a black pirate who has a touch of Stepin Fetchit in him, and Hook is positively dull, which is unforgivable. This *Peter Pan* could fill a rainy afternoon and could offer a lesson in how the same story gets changed in different adaptations. But place it next to the pair of *Pans* coming out with major market push, and it's in a league by itself—the minor league.

## RCA VHS VCR

continued from page 28

ment also holds buttons for audio dub, video dub, TV/simulcast/line input, tape speed and express recording.

The rear panel holds the power cord, and a depressed jack panel with single F-connectors for all RF input and output, with a selector for channel 3/4 RF output. Two rows of color-coded RCA-type pin jacks provide connections for video and stereo input and output.

The remote control is somewhat long due to its jog/shuttle dial. The central portion of the top holds buttons for TV, VCR 1, VCR 2, off/power, TV/VCR, input, display, clear, volume up and down, channel up and down, memory, time remaining, previous channel, mute, rewind/search, stop, fast forward/search, frame advance, pause, play, record and auto edit.

The central button panel is also the cover for a compartment containing less frequently used buttons. It swings to the left to reveal additional buttons for off/power, TV, VCR 1, VCR 2, program,

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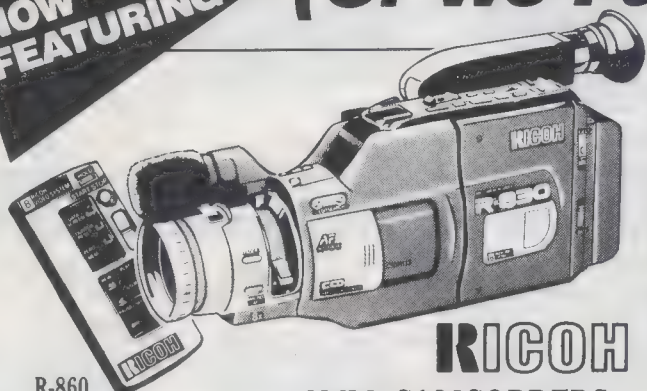
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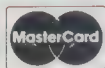
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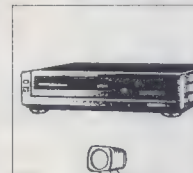
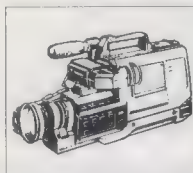
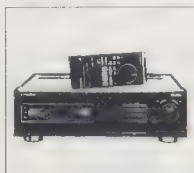
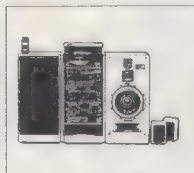
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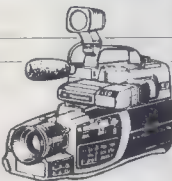
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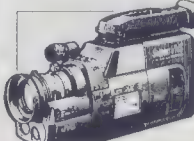
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PV-610.....	
PV-520.....	8xZoom
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HR-D660U.....	New
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HR-D840U.....	Hi-Fi
HR-S5000U.....	SVHS
HR-S5500U.....	SVHS
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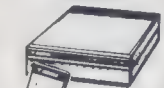


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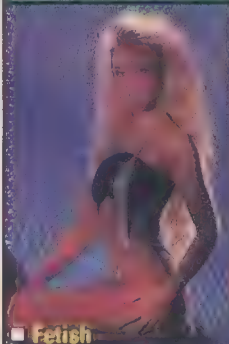


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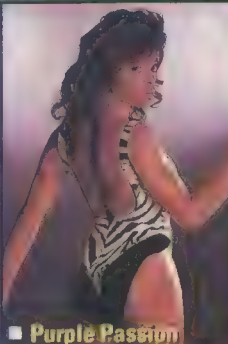
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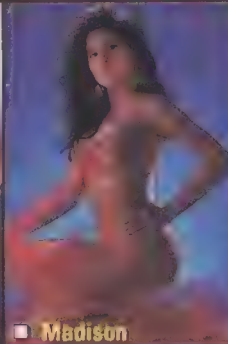
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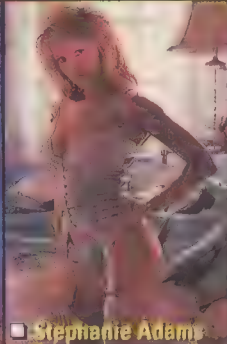
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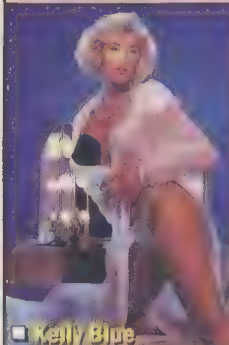
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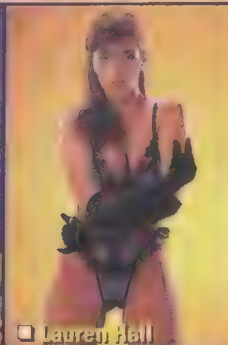
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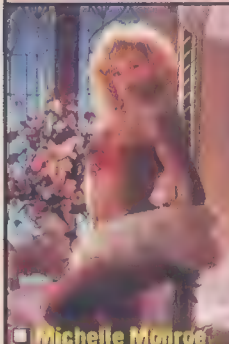
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ALL MODELS ARE 18 YEARS AND OVER, ALL RECORDS ON FILE.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Addr/Apt.# \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Sign/Age/Date \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ I am over 18 years and request this material.

## THE Video SERVICE



AS LOW AS

**1¢**  
each!

WE'RE LOOKING FOR ACTIVE BUYERS OF GENUINE ALL-MALE SEX VIDEOS!!

### ON 60 MINUTE CASSETTES

In order to further expand our list of satisfied customers, we've cut out the middle-man to bring you a most unusual offer. We are willing to give you the hottest collection of videos ever assembled for an unbelievable 1¢ each, plus shipping costs! This will entitle you to receive regular discounts on new hardcore releases and specialty videos from our giant catalog. This offer comes with now strings attached, and no threatening letters in the future. So stop paying top dollar for your XXX entertainment, and start buying direct from The VIDEO SERVICE!

### YOU'LL RECEIVE THESE 42 HOT HITS...

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SLAMMERS        | <input type="checkbox"/> HEAVY LOADS        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK           | <input type="checkbox"/> JOBS               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SLICK           | <input type="checkbox"/> LUST               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FIST            | <input type="checkbox"/> KING KONG          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ROUND POUND     | <input type="checkbox"/> BEEF STROKNOFF     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GROUP JERK      | <input type="checkbox"/> GROUP GROPE        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ON MY FACE      | <input type="checkbox"/> PLUGGERS           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHOOT IT ALL    | <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE ME            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STROKE JOB      | <input type="checkbox"/> THIS LOADS FOR YOU |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PETER EATER     | <input type="checkbox"/> REAMERS            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LICKING LOADS   | <input type="checkbox"/> DOUBLE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE IT ALL     | <input type="checkbox"/> GANG OFF           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALL THE WAY IN  | <input type="checkbox"/> TEN INCH CLUB      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TWIN OFF        | <input type="checkbox"/> FILL THE CUP       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ERUPTING        | <input type="checkbox"/> ON THEIR OWN       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUCKER          | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTTOMS UP         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUNGE          | <input type="checkbox"/> WET SHORTS         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEEPER THOAT    | <input type="checkbox"/> GOLDEN BOYS        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> THIS            | <input type="checkbox"/> UP ALL NIGHT       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UP HIS          | <input type="checkbox"/> STAINED SHEETS     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GREASE THE PALM | <input type="checkbox"/> BEND OVER          |

**BONUS!!**  
90 CUMSHOT VIDEO  
**FREE!!**  
If you Order within  
the next 30 days!!

☐ YES!! Rush my 42 Videos!  
I understand that if my order  
is placed within 30 days, I  
receive the \_\_\_\_\_ video  
absolutely FREE!!

I've enclosed \$25 (that's 1¢ plus 59¢ each for shipping).  
Canadians add \$10, remit in US funds only.  
Send to: **The VIDEO SERVICE, Dept HWO**  
**PO BOX 18877, GARY, IN 46401-0877**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ I am over 19 years of age. Specify: ☐ MHS ☐ BETA

For additional information, circle No. 90 on Reader Service Card.



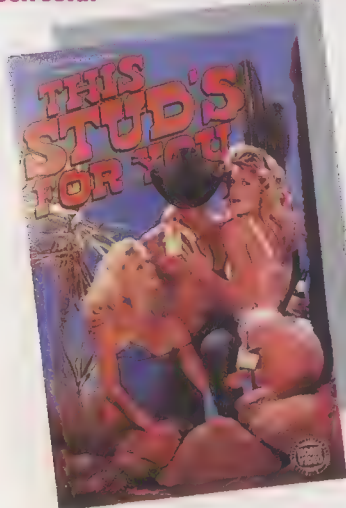
# ALL FOUR SUPER HOT AND SEXY VIDEOS FOR ONLY \$19.99! A \$199.00 Value



**Slip Into Ginger and Amber — Ginger Lynn, Amber Lynn, Stacey Donovan** in a masterpiece produced by Anthony Spinelli. The ladies are determined to outdo one another in their race to fulfill their wildest fantasies. These "blonde bombshells" have never looked better that they do in this classic release. Time Approximate 1 Hour 15 Min.

Our **Iron-clad guarantee** that comes with every purchase also applies to this special offer. It's simple. If you are not 100% delighted with your purchase just return it within 30 days for your money back. No questions asked! But we're sure that you will be more than pleased with each of the 4 sexy videos starring the hottest names in the business. Place your order today and we'll also include a specially selected "mystery gift" along with our brand new 64 page color catalog filled with more of the best buys in adult video — **ABSOLUTELY FREE!**

**Please note:** Due to the extremely unusual nature of this offer we reserve the right to return any order, unopened, after the first 5,000 sets have been sold.



**This Stud's For You — Bunny Bleu, John Holmes and Stacey Donovan.** Stacey and Bunny are assigned the task of picking the "Stud of the Year" from lots and lots of entries. The key issue seems to be whether stamina is more of an asset over size. The days before the ceremony are filled with moans of delight even though the girls do their best to remain impartial. Time Approximate 1 Hour 7 Min.

As part of a national campaign to introduce you to our friendly, discreet and efficient video service we're making this unbeatable offer. For just \$19.99 we will ship to you all four of the feature-length videos you see in this ad. We repeat. All 4 video features will be sent to you for just \$19.99! You'll receive **Seka In "Heavenly Desire," Ginger Lynn and Amber Lynn In "Slip Into Ginger and Amber," Gall Force, Brittany Stryker and Lois Ayres In "Virgin Heat" and Stacey Donovan and Bunny Bleu In "This Stud's For You"!** #6600



**Heavenly Desire — Seka, Serena, Jamie Gillis and Heather Gordon** make video history in this award-winning classic about two very sexy angels returning to earth. Seka really sizzles as she stirs up lots of sexy fun between mortals. She also finds the time to get in on the fun! Time Approximate 1 Hour 10 Min.



**Virgin Heat — Gall Force, Brittany Stryker and Lois Ayres** go on a sex spree that just doesn't end. They volunteer to test a new aphrodisiac for a slightly mad scientist. The magic formula can cure impotency and turn bashful beauties into blazing hot lovers! Time Approximate 1 Hour 12 min.

©1989 ULTRA CORPORATION, 354 North St., Milford, CT 06460

ULTRA CORPORATION, P.O. BOX 3812, MILFORD, CT 06460-0399 DEPT. FN60  
Sirs, I have enclosed my check, M.O., Visa, M.C. information. Please rush me the 4 videos under a 30-DAY MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE. (CT res. add sales tax.) #6600  
**CANADIAN RESIDENTS:** Available from Ultra Corp. 4944 Decarie Blvd., CP305 Montreal, Que. H3X 3T6 please add 30% plus \$4.00 M & H to prices shown. All orders shipped duty-free from within Canada. (Que. Residents add 9% sales tax).  
**NOTICE:** I declare that I am an adult. 21 years of age or over (19 years of age or over for Canadian residents). I am purchasing these for my private use in my own home and will not sell the material or furnish it to minors.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # in case we have a question about your order \_\_\_\_\_ phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ M.C. ☐ Visa Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_  
Account # \_\_\_\_\_  
Bank or Org. issuing card \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: AVAILABLE IN VHS ONLY  
Video Total \$19.99  
CT State Tax \_\_\_\_\_  
P&H \$3.00  
Total Enc. \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Void where prohibited by law.

For additional information, circle No. 75 on Reader Service Card.



# SUPERSTUDS

ON FILM

75c

EACH IN QUANTITY



<input type="checkbox"/> BUCK ADAMS	<input type="checkbox"/> JIM PIKE	<input type="checkbox"/> BLAKE PALMER	<input type="checkbox"/> SHANE HUNTER	<input type="checkbox"/> MARC WALLACE	<input type="checkbox"/> PAUL THOMAS
<input type="checkbox"/> PETER	<input type="checkbox"/> BILLY	<input type="checkbox"/> RON	<input type="checkbox"/> JON	<input type="checkbox"/> WALLACE	<input type="checkbox"/> JESSIE
<input type="checkbox"/> NATHAN	<input type="checkbox"/> GIE	<input type="checkbox"/> JEREMY	<input type="checkbox"/> DOUG	<input type="checkbox"/> EDWARD	<input type="checkbox"/> EASTON
<input type="checkbox"/> SCOTT	<input type="checkbox"/> RAY	<input type="checkbox"/> TROY	<input type="checkbox"/> CAL	<input type="checkbox"/> JEFF	<input type="checkbox"/> HANS
<input type="checkbox"/> RICH	<input type="checkbox"/> VICTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> TAMES	<input type="checkbox"/> JAMMER	<input type="checkbox"/> MALEU	<input type="checkbox"/> MUELLER
<input type="checkbox"/> J.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> DON	<input type="checkbox"/> TONY	<input type="checkbox"/> DAVID	<input type="checkbox"/> JOEY	<input type="checkbox"/> JEFF
<input type="checkbox"/> BRADLEY	<input type="checkbox"/> FERNANDO	<input type="checkbox"/> MONTANA	<input type="checkbox"/> SANCHEZ	<input type="checkbox"/> SILVEIRA	<input type="checkbox"/> STRYKER
<input type="checkbox"/> TOM	<input type="checkbox"/> FRANK	<input type="checkbox"/> BOY	<input type="checkbox"/> RANDY	<input type="checkbox"/> FRANCOISE	<input type="checkbox"/> DAMIEN
<input type="checkbox"/> BYRON	<input type="checkbox"/> JAMES	<input type="checkbox"/> BOY	<input type="checkbox"/> SPEARS	<input type="checkbox"/> PAPILLON	<input type="checkbox"/> CASHMERE
<input type="checkbox"/> SASHA	<input type="checkbox"/> STEVE	<input type="checkbox"/> STEVE	<input type="checkbox"/> JOHN	<input type="checkbox"/> HARRY	<input type="checkbox"/> BUDDY
<input type="checkbox"/> GABOR	<input type="checkbox"/> DRAKE	<input type="checkbox"/> VEGAS	<input type="checkbox"/> HOLMES	<input type="checkbox"/> REEMS	<input type="checkbox"/> LOVE
<input type="checkbox"/> DAN	<input type="checkbox"/> MIKE	<input type="checkbox"/> RANDY	<input type="checkbox"/> CRAIG	<input type="checkbox"/> JOHNNY	<input type="checkbox"/> GREG
<input type="checkbox"/> STEELE	<input type="checkbox"/> HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/> WEST	<input type="checkbox"/> ROBERTS	<input type="checkbox"/> ANGEL	<input type="checkbox"/> ROME

Why buy generic videos with dated stars, grainy pictures and dubbed sound from some of those California Scam outfits? Our videos are brand new with the exact stars that you choose in explicit, uncensored hard-core. Also, every 60 minute tape is recorded in super HQ High Resolution color, complete with sync sound and musical score. And with due respect to your privacy, every thing we ship to you is plainly wrapped without the slightest indication of its contents showing on the outside. **SO ORDER NOW!**

**PRICES:**

- ☐ Any two for \$10
- ☐ Any 12 for \$15
- ☐ Any 23 for \$25
- ☐ ALL 42 JUST \$32

**FREE VIDEO TAPE!!!!**  
**90 SHOTS!**  
 ...THAT'S MORE THAN ONE PER MINUTE.  
 And we'll include it free when you order all 42 SUPERSTUDS Videos!

**OUR SATISFACTION GUARANTEE:**  
 You must be completely satisfied or send back for a prompt courteous credit toward future purchases.

**POSTAGE & HANDLING**

- ☐ 1 TO 12 VIDEOS, ADD \$2
- ☐ 23 VIDEOS ADD \$3
- ☐ ALL 42 VIDEOS ADD \$5

**Send To:**  
**REEL DATES, Dept. HWO**  
**P.O. BOX 370**  
**New Buffalo, MI 49117-0370**

Rush items indicated, I've enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ PLUS P/H  
☐ CASH ☐ CHECK ☐ MONEY ORDER  
 ....as payment in full. Canadians remit in US funds only.  
 No foreign COD's. Send COD, I enclosed \$8 extra plus P/H  
 PLEASE SPECIFY: ☐ BETA ☐ VHS  
☐ I am over 18 years of age and request this material  
☐ Add \$2 for insurance and First Class Handling.

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_  
**ADDRESS/APT#** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_  
**STATE/ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGN** \_\_\_\_\_  
**AGE/B-DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

# FREE!

## SAMPLE VIDEO

Why are we willing to send you a genuine hardcore sex video **FREE**? Because seeing believing, and we are confident that once you've seen any of these great tapes, you'll become a regular customer. So, order now and start building your video library at prices below wholesale!

## SUPERSTARS OF MOTION 2 HOURS!



**TWENTY STARS!**  
 A visual feast of the world's most sensual women. Twenty of the hottest & most beautiful ladies engaged in as many full length sex scenes with the most dynamic erotic male stars. Featuring the voluptuous Angela Baron & Janette Littlelove. Penthouses Christy Canyon, Barbara Dare & the erotic sensation Tisa.  
☐ #SMP 4 (Reg. \$26.95)  
**JUST \$9.95 (Refunded on next order).**

## ADULT VIDEO CATALOGS ON VIDEOTAPE

- ☐ **Interracial & All Black Video** 60 min. 30 previews. 30min **VCT9 \$4.95**
- ☐ **Gay & Bi-Sexual Video Catalog** 30 previews. 30min **VCT10 \$4.95**
- ☐ **15min Video Catalog of the voluptuous Angela Baron in 28 arching positions** **VCT11 \$9.95** (the cost of all video catalogs in future order)

## FREE PRINTED CATALOG



56 All Color Pages. Featuring 100's of XXX Rated Videos, Magazines, and more. Featuring Privacy, Overnight Shipping, Lowest Prices & Satisfaction Guarantees.

**MUST SIGN AUTHORIZATION BELOW FOR FREE CATALOG (No P/H for catalog)**

**CALL 1-800-874-8960**

Send entire ad & **LEISURE CONCEPTS 32 Dept. HWO** remittance to: **PO Box 10688 Merrillville, IN 48411**

Please send the items marked above.  
 I enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_ plus \$4 P/H as payment in full.  
 In the form of ☐ Check ☐ Money Order  
☐ **SPECIAL: BUY #SMP4 AND #VCT7 on this ad and get #VCT8 FREE #VTSM1**  
☐ VHS ☐ BETA

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_  
**ADD** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_  
**ST/ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_  
 I am over 19 yrs. of age & request this material.  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Birthdate** \_\_\_\_\_



# TOUCH ME

1-900

230-

HEAT

THAT'S 1-900  
230-1328

FEEL THE  
HEAT!  
DO IT  
NOW!

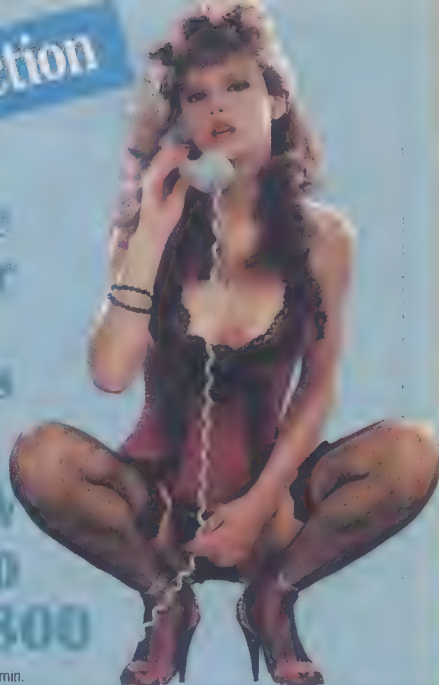


Satisfaction

Call the  
number  
that  
delivers  
**HOT  
ACTION**

1-900  
646-4800

Adults only. \$2 per min.



## DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE



...on the two  
for one line!

1-900  
**246-2244**

Two hot girls  
for every guy.  
Even more girls  
if you want.  
The girls are  
waiting to talk  
to you!

Must be 18+. \$2 a min.

## TABOO

1-900

**463-SINS**

THAT'S 1-900-463-7467

**FORBIDDEN  
PLEASURES**

**SPECIAL  
INTERESTS**

**ALL LIFESTYLES**

**24 HOURS/7 DAYS**

Adults Only



## I'M WAITING

Call now for  
the love  
connection  
that'll make  
you...

1-900  
**246-  
3800**

Over 18 please. \$2 per minute.

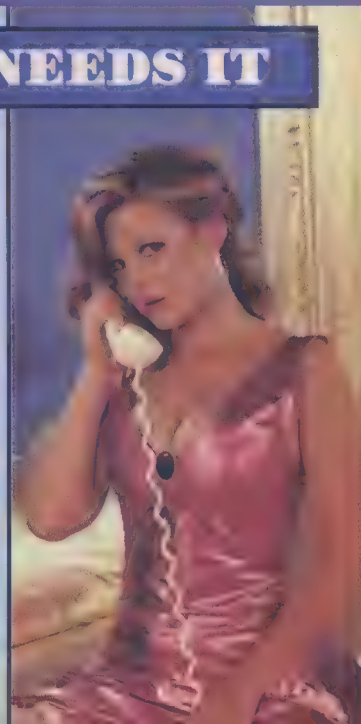


## NANCY NEEDS IT

For strictly  
adult  
conversation

CALL 1-900  
**246-  
5800**

Strictly for adults only.  
\$2 per minute.





**JUST  
RELEASED**

# 132 VIDEOS

ONLY  
**25¢**  
EACH IN VOLUME

Every 60 minute tape is jammed with the greatest collection of studs and the hottest sex action on video! And we guarantee you will receive the exact titles listed below... No Substitutes! This offer comes with no strings attached or further obligations. We're convinced that once you see our great products and prices, you'll order again! And with due respect to your privacy everything we ship will be plainly packaged without the slightest indication of its contents on the outside.

Just so you can  
see the great products  
we have to offer!



- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love Muscle      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sauna             | <input type="checkbox"/> Rough Riders       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sticky Stuff      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stud Service     | <input type="checkbox"/> Crazy Roberts     | <input type="checkbox"/> Johnny Angel       | <input type="checkbox"/> Jerry Helmer      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Wet All Over      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet              | <input type="checkbox"/> Slippery When Wet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thix             | <input type="checkbox"/> Buddy Love        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lip Service        | <input type="checkbox"/> I Love It Hard    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 69 Action        | <input type="checkbox"/> Ebony Lust        | <input type="checkbox"/> Damian Hunter      | <input type="checkbox"/> Johnny Cool       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Byron        | <input type="checkbox"/> Bulging Bluejeans | <input type="checkbox"/> Bubble Bath        | <input type="checkbox"/> Spread It Wide    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All That Jazz    | <input type="checkbox"/> Greg Rome         | <input type="checkbox"/> Housewives         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sporting Loads    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wild             | <input type="checkbox"/> Both Ways         | <input type="checkbox"/> David Elliot       | <input type="checkbox"/> Daryl Edwards     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> F.M. Bradley     | <input type="checkbox"/> Ready & Able      | <input type="checkbox"/> Oil Check          | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Shots         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volcanic Loads   | <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Drake       | <input type="checkbox"/> Beach Blanket Bang | <input type="checkbox"/> Tease Me          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Triple Play      | <input type="checkbox"/> Jizz Blitz        | <input type="checkbox"/> Rick Rivers        | <input type="checkbox"/> Randy Paul        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dan T. Mann      | <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle Man        | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Vibrations    | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark Meat         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slidin' Home     | <input type="checkbox"/> David Sanders     | <input type="checkbox"/> Stud Ranch         | <input type="checkbox"/> Button            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Off              | <input type="checkbox"/> A Few Good Men    | <input type="checkbox"/> Scott Apollo       | <input type="checkbox"/> Harley Davis      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scott Irish      | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumping           | <input type="checkbox"/> Adonis In Action   | <input type="checkbox"/> Organ Grinder     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hung Studs       | <input type="checkbox"/> Troy Tanier       | <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Hanna        | <input type="checkbox"/> Scorpion          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Jeremy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting Off       | <input type="checkbox"/> Lotion In Motion   | <input type="checkbox"/> Drilling          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tongue Lashing   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Tub Heat      | <input type="checkbox"/> Damian Cashmere    | <input type="checkbox"/> Jason Dean        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peter Eaters     | <input type="checkbox"/> Francois Papillon | <input type="checkbox"/> & Nasty            | <input type="checkbox"/> Skin Flutting     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Johnny Blackbone | <input type="checkbox"/> King              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Breath         | <input type="checkbox"/> Cream Dreams      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Oozing            | <input type="checkbox"/> Buck Adams         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ed LeFevre        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blake Palmer     | <input type="checkbox"/> Marc Wallace      | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasty Dancing      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sit On It         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Its So Big       | <input type="checkbox"/> Jumbo Jacks       | <input type="checkbox"/> Dip Stick          | <input type="checkbox"/> My Turn           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sasha Gabor      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rick Savage       | <input type="checkbox"/> Jack Baker         | <input type="checkbox"/> Jessie Eastern    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fill Her Up      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Stiff         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ben Wati           | <input type="checkbox"/> Panty Raid        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quick Licks      | <input type="checkbox"/> Herschel Savage   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bud Squad          | <input type="checkbox"/> Rocky DeLorenzo   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peter North      | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaking Loins     | <input type="checkbox"/> Randy Paul         | <input type="checkbox"/> Touch of          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balls            | <input type="checkbox"/> Lust Triangle     | <input type="checkbox"/> Love Showers       | <input type="checkbox"/> Love Spells       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inside Trading   | <input type="checkbox"/> Don Fernando      | <input type="checkbox"/> Nite Heat          | <input type="checkbox"/> Chris Reed        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frank James      | <input type="checkbox"/> Take Aim          | <input type="checkbox"/> Jan Waters         | <input type="checkbox"/> Man               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close Shaves     | <input type="checkbox"/> Meat Boat         | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting Off        | <input type="checkbox"/> Double Headers    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skewered         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ray Visor         | <input type="checkbox"/> Billy Dee          | <input type="checkbox"/> Don Gomez         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tony Montana     | <input type="checkbox"/> Bud Downs         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Bod's          | <input type="checkbox"/> Group Grope       |

## OUR FANTASTIC PRICES

- ☐ ANY 15 ONLY \$40
- ☐ ANY 62 ONLY \$25
- ☐ ALL 132 JUST \$33

## POSTAGE & HANDLING

- ☐ 15 VIDEOS ADD \$3
- ☐ 62 VIDEOS ADD \$4
- ☐ 132 VIDEOS ADD \$5

## OUR MONEYBACK GUARANTEE

We guarantee these videos to be brand new, no rentals, rejects or the old old films... just brand new, recently released movies!

**ORDER ALL 132 VIDEOS & RECEIVE 90 COMSHOT TAPE FREE!**

SEND ENTIRE AD & REMITTANCE TO:

**COUPLES ONLY VIDEOS Dept** HWO  
P.O. Box 5460 Chicago, IL 60680-5460

RUSH items indicated, I Enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ plus P/H  
☐ Checks ☐ Money Orders ☐ Cash as payment in full.  
Canadians remit in US Funds-No Foreign COD's.

☐ Send COD, I Enclose \$8 extra plus P/H  
Please Specify: ☐ BETA ☐ VHS

☐ I AM OVER 19 YEARS AND REQUEST THIS MATERIAL

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address? Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Age/B-Date \_\_\_\_\_

For additional information, circle No. 92 on Reader Service Card.

# 42 HOT HITS



AS  
LOW  
AS

**1¢**

**WE'RE LOOKING FOR ACTIVE BUYERS  
OF GENUINE ALL-MALE SEX VIDEOS!!**

## ON 60 MINUTE CASSETTES

In order to further expand our list of satisfied customers, we've cut out the middleman to bring you a most unusual offer. We are willing to give you the hottest collection of videos ever assembled for an unbelievable 1¢ each, plus shipping costs! This will entitle you to receive regular discounts on new hardcore releases and specialty videos from our giant catalog. This offer comes with no strings attached, and no threatening letters in the future. So stop paying top dollar for your XXX entertainment, and start buying direct from HOT HITS!

**YOU'LL RECEIVE THESE  
42 HOT HITS...**

### SLAMMERS

BLACK \_\_\_\_\_  
SLICK FIST \_\_\_\_\_  
FIST \_\_\_\_\_  
ROUND POUND \_\_\_\_\_  
GROUP JERK \_\_\_\_\_  
ON MY FACE \_\_\_\_\_  
SHOOT IT ALL \_\_\_\_\_  
JOB \_\_\_\_\_  
EATER \_\_\_\_\_  
LICKING \_\_\_\_\_  
TAKE IT ALL \_\_\_\_\_  
ALL THE WAY IN \_\_\_\_\_  
TWIN \_\_\_\_\_ OFF  
ERUPTING \_\_\_\_\_  
SUCKER \_\_\_\_\_  
PLUNGE \_\_\_\_\_  
DEEPER THROAT \_\_\_\_\_  
THIS \_\_\_\_\_  
UP HIS \_\_\_\_\_  
GREASE THE PALM \_\_\_\_\_

### HEAVY LOADS

JOBS \_\_\_\_\_  
LUST \_\_\_\_\_  
KING KONG \_\_\_\_\_  
BEEF \_\_\_\_\_  
GROUP GROPE \_\_\_\_\_  
PLUGERS \_\_\_\_\_  
MAKE ME \_\_\_\_\_  
THIS \_\_\_\_\_ FOR YOU  
REAMERS \_\_\_\_\_  
DOUBLE \_\_\_\_\_  
GANG \_\_\_\_\_ OFF  
TEN INCH \_\_\_\_\_  
FILL THE CUP \_\_\_\_\_  
ON THEIR OWN \_\_\_\_\_  
UP \_\_\_\_\_  
WET SHOTS \_\_\_\_\_  
GOLDEN BOYS \_\_\_\_\_  
UP ALL NIGHT \_\_\_\_\_  
SHEETS \_\_\_\_\_  
OVER \_\_\_\_\_

**BONUS!!**  
90 SHOT VIDEOS

**FREE!!** If you Order within the next 30 days!!

YES!! Rush my 42 Videos I understand that if my order is placed within 30 days, I receive the SHOT Video absolutely FREE!!

I've enclosed \$25 (that's 1¢ plus 59¢ each for shipping). Canadians add \$10, remit US funds only.

Send To: **HOT HITS Dept.** HWO

P.O. Box 10935, Merrillville, IN 46411

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Addr. \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I am over 19 years of age. Please Specify: ☐ VHS ☐ BETA





## It now lasts up to five years longer.

Americans live longer nowadays. Up to five years longer, says one study, than in 1970. One reason is that people know more about reducing their risk of heart disease. And we've helped. This year the AHA will invest more than \$70 million in cardiovascular research and organize 2.7 million volunteers to go out and spread the word. To learn more, write us at:  
7320 Greenville Ave., Box 10, Dallas, TX 75231.

**American Heart  
Association**



This space provided as a public service.

**12  
Videos  
ONLY 1.95  
EACH  
IN  
QUANTITY**



**HORNY SEX STARS**

**SATISFACTION  
GUARANTEED**

MORE THAN 25 SUPER SEX STARS  
-AJA, ARIEL KNIGHT, PETER NORTH,  
-NINA DE PONCA, RAY VICTORY,  
-JADE EAST, NINA HARTLEY AND  
MORE — FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE!

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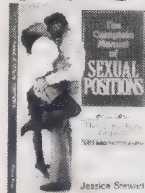
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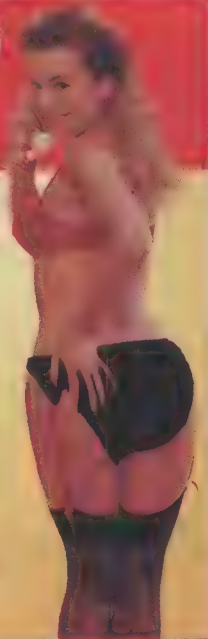
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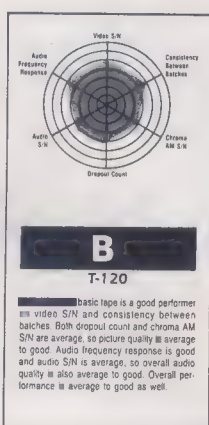
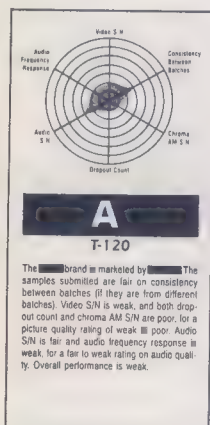
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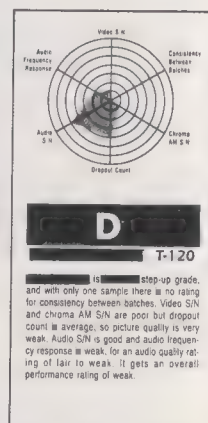
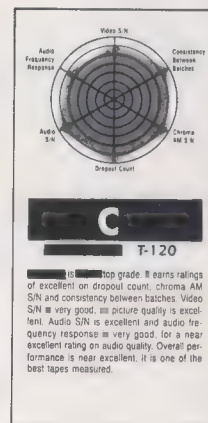


grade A or B and high grade C or D — you would want to use in your machine?

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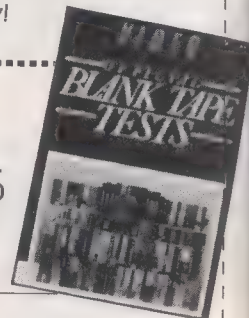
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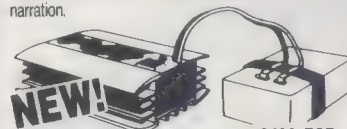
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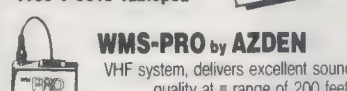


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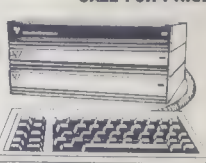
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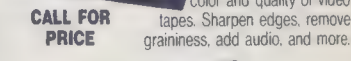
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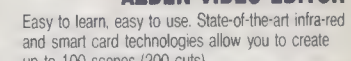
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## VIDEOTESTS

clear, memory, help, display, index, time search, input, previous channel, ten-digit keypad, 100, 2x, slow, slow speed up and down, tracking up and down, auto tracking and tape (record) speed. Some buttons are on both levels to reduce the need to flip the compartment door.

**Operation.** Hooking up the VR685HF is very easy, and the manual illustrates many options. Although some basic operations may be activated from

the front panel, most, including setup, require the remote. The program button calls up a basic menu for setting the clock, VCR setup, the timer, program review and program edit. At this point, onscreen displays, the keypad and dedicated buttons guide the user through most operations.

While it is nice to have so much power in the remote control, it seems a bit chancy to limit the controls on the

machine, but that's a common trend among today's VCRs. Some users may be a bit frustrated by having to use the remote almost all the time. A user who has this, or a similar machine, as his only VCR could be in trouble if the remote breaks or is misplaced. We strongly advise getting a spare remote for any VCR that uses few front panel controls.

The exposed buttons on the remote can also control a second RCA or recent GE VCR and TV set. These buttons control the tape transport, volume, channel scan, input selection, the onscreen display, the clock/counter, the counter memory and the jog/shuttle dial.

The tidiness of a simple VCR front panel and the unimposing remote are somewhat negated by having to constantly flip the control panel up and down. For the basic user, ease of operation is very good to excellent. Sophisticated users may be less enthusiastic.

**Performance.** The VR685HF has a horizontal resolution of 240 to 250 lines with an unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio of 46.3 decibels at SP, 45.5 dB at LP and 43.7 dB at SLP. The weighted video S/N is 53.6 dB at SP, 52.9 dB at LP and 51.4 dB at SLP. The

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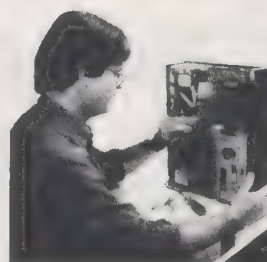
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## VIDEOTESTS

chroma AM S/N is 45.3 dB at SP, 41.6 dB at LP and 41.4 dB at SLP. All these measurements are close to excellent. The chroma PM S/N is 41.4 dB at SP, 37.9 dB at LP and 38.8 dB at SLP, which is just good. The video quality is very good to excellent.

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**Conclusion.** RCA's VR685HF is loaded with advanced features. The vid-

eo quality is very good to excellent. Ease of operation is very good to excellent, but declines as the sophistication of the user increases. The audio quality is very good. We rate overall performance as very good to excellent, however, some hands-on users might rate it lower. At its suggested price of \$649, it is an excellent value.

## PANASONIC

continued from page 31

ratio of 48.7 decibels and an unweighted video S/N of 45.4 dB. The weighted luminance S/N is 50.9 dB and the weighted video S/N is 47.9 dB. Its rated video S/N of 46 dB is weighted using the Japanese standard, with a 100 kilohertz high-pass filter. Our 45.4 dB video S/N figure is weighted with a 10 kHz high-pass filter, and is directly comparable with all other measurements we make. The chroma AM S/N is 40.2 dB and the chroma PM S/N is 41.3 dB.

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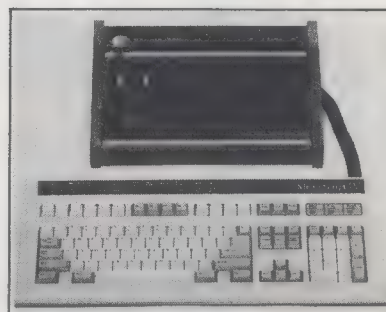
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lent/very good because of the rolling during searches at the CLV speed, especially since this is the speed used for the majority of discs.

From digital audio tracks, the LX-200's 8x oversampling and 18-bit digital-to-analog converter deliver a measured frequency response of 10 hertz to 20 kHz, +2.4/-1.4 dB. It is rated to 4 hertz, which is lower than our test disc goes. The digital audio S/N is over 103 dB (our measurement limit). The dynamic range is 97 dB, and total harmonic distortion is 0.01 percent. From the FM analog tracks, audio frequency re-

sponse is 20 Hz to 20 kHz, +0.7/-1.7 dB, with an S/N of 74.1 dB and total harmonic distortion of 0.01 percent. Audio quality is very good/excellent compared to the best LV player we've measured, but which costs four times as much.

**Conclusion.** The Panasonic LX-200 combi player performed beautifully in many areas, but fell short on CLV search and in the flatness of its audio frequency response. Its overall rating is excellent/very good. Since it does not have costly digital circuitry, it doesn't offer special effects at the CLV speed or digital effects like strobe or still with

sound, but it can play both sides of a laserdisc without the user having to flip the disc manually. At a suggested price of \$850, it is an exceedingly good value and we recommend it highly for its picture and sound quality. ■

## S-VHS

continued from page 48

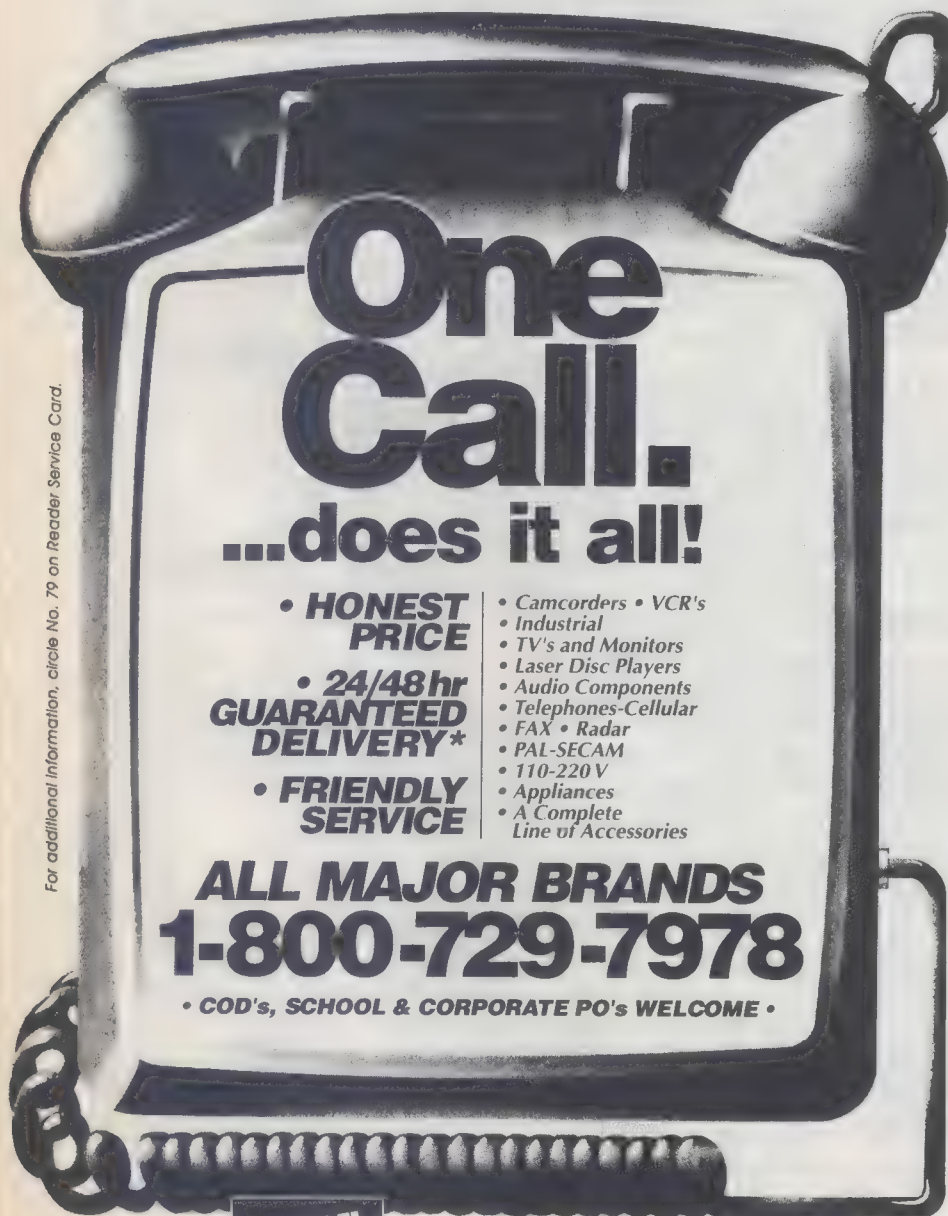
boosts horizontal resolution to 470 lines. The 460 also records hi-fi sound, and features laminated amorphous video heads and a flying erase head.

JVC's new X-1 uses three 330,000-pixel CCD chips to extend S-VHS quality even more. While a single chip can't deliver the maximum horizontal resolution of the format, mounting three chips on a special prism does. The X-1 tops off at 600 lines, with a 58 dB signal-to-noise ratio. To keep size down, it uses VHS-C cassettes and records only at the standard speed, using a standard-size 62mm video cylinder. The 30-minute VHS-C recording time isn't considered a drawback with this high-tech camcorder, although it would be with a consumer camcorder.

If there's any doubt that S-VHS has proven itself a worthwhile medium, you need look no further than some of the TV stations around the country. While most of the big-buck network affiliates remain wedded to pricey formats like Betacam and M-II, some of the smaller stations, such as KDOC in Anaheim, California, have found that S-VHS is more than adequate for their purposes. After dubbing their entire tape library from 3/4-inch to S-VHS a few years ago, they dumped their aging U-format VTRs and switched to Panasonic's industrial S-VHS decks. They even do their newsgathering on S-VHS.

For many consumers, the benefits of S-VHS, whether in VCRs or camcorders, do not seem to justify the added expense. Finally realizing this, manufacturers are beginning to respond with less expensive S-VHS decks, like Panasonic's new PVS-4080 for \$829. Camcorder prices are also coming down, now that there's a wider selection of models and formats to choose among.

Quality video, in any format, has always been a tough sell, and the differences between plain VHS and S-VHS may not be glaring enough to entice new buyers. But JVC may have an answer for this as well, and is said to be readying a "new and improved" S-VHS, called the Mark II, for delivery next year. Expect to see this latest refinement offer digital hi-fi audio to raise format quality to even greater heights. ■



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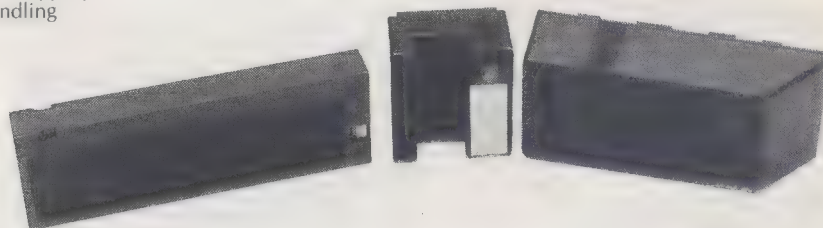
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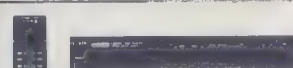
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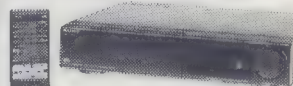
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# CONTEST

continued from page 16

## GRAND PRIZE:

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## FIRST PRIZES

Up to \$1,000 toward the purchase of a camcorder will be awarded to each of the two First Prize winners.

## SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS

Five entrants will each receive a Video Magazine T-shirt and a Scotch blank videocassette as recipients of our Special Merit Awards.

All entries must be postmarked no later than March 1, 1991, and cannot be returned. Entries must be on Scotch brand videotapes. Please include your complete name, address and phone number, and tell us which categories you wish to enter.

Send tapes to: Video Magazine/Scotch Home Video Contest  
Video Magazine  
460 West 34 Street  
New York, NY 10001

## VIDEO MAGAZINE/SCOTCH VIDEOCASSETTE HOME VIDEO CONTEST RULES

1. Contest entries must include contestant's name, address and telephone number. Mail entries to Video/Scotch Home Video Contest, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, New York 10001. Each entry must be accompanied by a videocassette of the entrant's submission, and each entrant must be the original producer of the videocassette entered. All entries must be postmarked by March 1, 1991, to be eligible. All entries must be submitted on Scotch-brand videocassettes. Not responsible for late, lost or misdirected mail. Limit per household one entry in each of two categories. By entering this contest all entrants agree that all prizes are awarded upon the condition that 3M, Video Magazine and their respective agencies and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damage of any kind resulting from the acceptance or use of the prize.

2. Winners will be selected by Video Magazine. Entries will be judged on the basis of creativity, graphics, technical merit, directorial and editing skills. By entering the contest, each entrant accepts and agrees to be bound by these rules and the decision of the judges, which shall be final.

3. All entries and the videocassettes become the property of 3M. Winners will be notified by mail and required to sign an affidavit of eligibility and releases which must be completed and returned within 15 days of notification or the prize will be forfeited and awarded to an alternate winner. Winners grant permission for use of their names and/or photograph in conjunction with this and future promotions with no additional compensation.

## 4. PRIZES: GRAND PRIZE

One grand prize consisting of a trip for two (2) to the 1991 Funkausstellung International

Audio/Video Fair in Berlin, Germany. The trip includes round-trip coach airfare for two (2) from the major airport nearest the winner's home to an international airport with connections to Berlin, Germany. The winners will be met by a representative of 3M, the maker of Scotch videocassettes, and a representative of Video Magazine for a tour of the Funkausstellung International Audio/Video Fair. The prize also includes 7 days and 8 nights lodging in Berlin. Related expenses, such as ground transportation and meals, are the responsibility of 3M. The trip must be taken by September 3-4, 1991, or it will be forfeited. (Approximate retail value \$7,000.)

## FIRST PRIZES

Two (2) first prizes of up to \$1,000 each, which must be used toward purchase of a camcorder (approximate retail value depends on models chosen); plus two (2) Video Magazine Jogging Suits (approximate retail value, \$30 each), two (2) Video Magazine Sweatshirts (approximate retail value \$16 each) and two Video Magazine Tote Bags (approximate retail value \$10 each).

## SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS

Five (5) Special Merit Awards of one (1) Video Magazine T-shirt each (approximate retail value \$10 each) and one (1) Scotch blank videocassette each (approximate retail value \$10 each).

5. Limit one prize per household. All prizes will be awarded. No transfer, substitutions or cash equivalents of prizes. All taxes on prizes are the responsibility of the winners.

6. Contest open only to residents of the U.S. who are age 21 or older. Employees of 3M, Video Magazine, their immediate families, affiliates and agencies are not eligible to enter. Void where prohibited or restricted by law.

7. For a list of major prize winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Video Magazine/Scotch Home Video Contest, 460 W. 34 St., New York, NY 10001.

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# ANTENNAS

continued from page 59

cold-water pipe outside the house and adding a lightning arrester in-line with the antenna lead-in cable. If a water pipe is not accessible, pound a long copper rod into the ground and attach the grounding wire. You can buy grounding wire and rods at Radio Shack and at most television shops.

## SAFETY FIRST

When installing an antenna, work only during fair weather, never in the rain or during a storm. Unless the antenna and the mast are small, enlist the help of a friend or a family member. Using the buddy system is your best hedge against injury. Be particularly wary of overhead telephone and power wires, and position the antenna so that it cannot hit any overhead wiring if it falls. Stay away from electrical wires when installing the antenna; if you touch a high-voltage wire while holding the antenna, you'll be electrocuted. This happens more frequently than one would think.

Carefully route the lead-in cable from the antenna to your television set to avoid slack and follow the natural contours of your home. Bring the cable into the house by drilling a hole through the wall. Use a cable lead-in tube (available at most electronics stores) to route the cable into the house. Apply RTV silicone sealant all around the opening to keep out moisture.

For a truly professional job, form a small loop with the cable before it enters the house. This way, water will bead down the cable and drop off the end of the loop, rather than seep into your house through the wall. You can learn more about installing TV antennas from *Antennas: Selection and Installation*, a handy book, available at Radio Shack, that covers everything you need to know to do the job right.

After your antenna is installed, check it out by tuning in all the stations one by one. Note the signal quality, both picture and sound, on a piece of paper. Then, as you make fine-tuning adjustments, you can compare the results with your notes to make sure you are improving the reception, not making it worse.

If you've installed a remote antenna rotor, have someone turn the dial and watch the antenna spin around. Make sure it doesn't snag on a wire or the mast. If it does, you'll have to take it down and reattach the rotor. And when everything checks out, sit back and enjoy the show.

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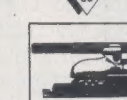
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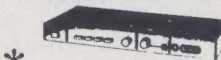
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# OFF THE AIR

## Unleashing video's neglected treasure

BY ANDY WICKSTROM

What's all this talk about laserdiscs? Here's a format that's been successfully ignored by most manufacturers, retailers and shoppers for a dozen years, but refuses to fade away. The situation is practically an insult to the wisdom of the mass market.

By any marketing yardstick, laserdiscs should have long ago been interred in the consumer electronics graveyard. One disc format was, in fact, when RCA pulled the plug in 1984 on its CED project (which is to today's laserdisc players what a Ford Escort is to a Lotus). Somehow, laserdiscs have defied neglect. Even though shoppers have avoided it in droves, Pioneer and a few other visionary companies continued to introduce new models throughout the '80s, carrying the banner as if somebody cared.

A few did. About 300,000 homes have laserdisc players. But that's less than one percent of the 63 million homes with one or more VCRs.

In the face of such unpopularity, isn't it time for laser companies to throw in the towel? After all, the public has spoken and what it has said, to judge by its spending habits, is something like this:

- *We don't care about picture quality.* So what if VHS gives us less horizontal resolution? We can still make out the really important stuff.

- *We don't care about sound quality.* Movies on laserdisc boast soundtracks as clear as compact discs, but we do not find this inspiring. Anyway, it would be too much trouble to hook the things up to amplifiers.

- *We don't care if the software is durable.* Nothing is worth watching more than once, except maybe *Gone With the Wind*. If we want a movie for keeps, we'll just tape it the next time it's on cable.

- *We want to spend as little as possible.* We can get a blank tape for \$3 and a VCR for \$250. Why not get the cheap-

est deal in town?

Retailers can claim a good chunk of the credit for keeping laserdiscs a virtual secret. Their durability and quality require a measure of knowledgeable explanation, but this kind of salesmanship isn't reflected promptly in the bottom line. Besides, who has the time when people are lining up for VCRs?

The laserdisc player was left to fend for itself, banished to the back end of a long display shelf, looking like any other black box, but burdened with a price sticker several hundred dollars above those of bargain-basement VHS VCRs. Without a monitor or a projection TV hookup to show what was going on inside their unremarkable exteriors, laserdisc players created no impression. Or rather, they were a mystery, and people don't like to spend money on mysteries.

Just how little the public knows about laserdiscs came to light recently when a trade group called the Laserdisc Association asked Nielsen Market Research (the TV ratings company) to question consumers about the format. While 60 percent of those polled said

they had heard of laserdiscs, only 17 percent reported ever having seen a laserdisc picture. Again, retailers can take some credit for keeping store demonstrations to a minimum.

Equally noteworthy was the consumer's notion of pricing. Asked what they thought a combination LD/CD player costs, 32 percent told Nielsen they didn't know, and 28 percent guessed it was over \$1,000 (more than twice as much as a low-end unit costs). As for the movies themselves, 34 percent didn't know and 25 percent said they must cost over \$50. Laserdiscs can cost that much, but they are the exception.

Yet, despite widespread indifference and misinformation, laser limps along. Why? Pioneer and other makers like to point out that digital audio, which consumers do seem to understand and crave, opened up the market. The much-admired CD and the much-scorned LD are cousins—and now that one machine can play both formats, video can ride audio's coattails.

A more persuasive reason is that the 300,000 laserdisc owners constitute an unusual fraternity. They want quality above all else. They want to watch *Citizen Kane* or *2001: A Space Odyssey* three times, maybe even four. Even more eccentric, they want to experience an opera or a ballet in a form that most nearly approximates being there.

When an East Coast mail-order distributor of discs, U.S. Laser, surveyed its customers this year, the company came up with an intriguing portrait. The average laserdisc owner, according to the survey, is 41 years old and male. He's had his player three years, and he bought seven discs in the first month. He bought 24 in the first year, and now the guy owns 106 discs!

Clearly, the laser buff is an odd duck. Compared to the penny-pinching inhabitants of the VHS world, he's an irresponsible spendthrift. Some of the more famous ones can even be seen in advertisements for Pioneer products, fellows like Bernardo Bertolucci and George Lucas. It just goes to show: Mavericks will always be with us. Thank goodness. ■

### RAIDERS OF THE LOST LASER.



Andy Wickstrom is Executive Editor of Video Business.



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